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VOLUME TWO



SIDNEY S. LENZ



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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	PASSING—FANCY!	I
II	DISCARD AND DISCORD	6
III	FOUR-CARD SUIT-BIDS	11
IV	PLAYS THAT WIN GAMES	17
V	THE FICKLE GODDESS	22
VI	WHY ORIGINAL BIDS SHOULD HAVE QUICK TRICKS	27
VII	THE OPTIMIST	32
VIII	WHEN INFORMATORY DOUBLES SHOULD BE LEFT IN	37
IX	SCINTILLATING PLAY	42
X	A LEADING QUESTION	47
XI	LUCK	52
XII	PREËMPTIVE STRATEGY	57
XIII	LEADING TRUMPS TO THE MAKER	62
XIV	THE OPPORTUNIST	67
XV	BIDS TO THE SCORE	72
XVI	AUCTION BRIDGE IN DUPLICATE	77
XVII	THE VERY WORST	82
XVIII	UNDERLEADING	86
XIX	THROWING THE LEAD	91
XX	THE QUITTER	96
XXI	THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSIVE BIDS	101
XXII	FAVORING CHANCES	106
XXIII	WHEN COUNTING COUNTS	111
XXIV	ADDED POSSIBILITIES	116
XXV	INFERENCES THAT WIN	121
XXVI	FORCING THE ISSUE	126

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXVII	THE NEGATION THEORY	131
XXVIII	SAFETY FIRST	136
XXIX	BORDERLINE HANDS	141
XXX	LOCATING A CARD	146
XXXI	PLAYING AGAINST PAR	151
XXXII	CHAMPIONSHIP HANDS	156
XXXIII	TO THE RESCUE!	160
XXXIV	COUNTING THE LOSERS	166
XXXV	TECHNIQUE	171
XXXVI	THE GAME OR THE BLOW	175
XXXVII	QUICK ON THE TRIGGER	179
XXXVIII	DELICATE PLAY	184
XXXIX	NO LAW AGAINST TRYING	189
XL	A CAMOUFLAGE DOUBLE	194
XLI	HELPLESS!	198
XLII	JUDGMENT	202
XLIII	THE SINGULARNESS OF SINGLETONS	207
XLIV	TOO LATE!	212
XLV	HIDDEN INFERENCES	217
XLVI	HANDS WE LOVE TO HOLD	222
XLVII	UNBLOCKING	227
XLVIII	UNDERLEADING	232
XLIX	FORCING THE BREAKS	237
L	SUIT SYMMETRY	242
LI	HOW SLAMS ARE MADE	247
LII	THE SPADE CONVENTION	251
LIII	PIVOTAL HANDS	256
LIV	HANDS REQUIRING UNUSUAL TREAT- MENT	261
LV	THERE IS OFTEN SAFETY IN VALOR	266
LVI	PARTNERSHIP	270
LVII	PROPER FINESSING	275
LVIII	FAITH AND FATE	280
LIX	THE DIVIDING LINE	285
LX	PERCEPTION	290

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
LXI ALIBIS	295
LXII NE PLUS ULTRA	300
LXIII RESTRAINT	304
LXIV THE CRITIC	309
LXV PITFALLS	314
LXVI MATCH PLAY	319
LXVII ESTABLISHING A SUIT	324
LXVIII GORGONS AND HYDRAS AND CHIMERAS DIRE	329
LXIX I CHALLENGE	334
LXX IN THE HANDS OF THE GODS	338
LXXI WHEN THE SUITS ARE WEAK AND THE PLAY IS STRONG	343
LXXII WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD	348
LXXIII COAXING A MISPLAY	353
LXXIV GUESS-WORK	358
LXXV THE "SAVE THE GAME" FETISH	363
LXXVI WHEN ENTRIES ARE SCARCE	368
LXXVII TWO-SUITERS	373
LXXVIII FORCING THE BREAKS	378
LXXIX PLAYING BAD HANDS	383
LXXX WHEN IT PAYS TO PASS	388
LXXXI THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL CARDS	393
LXXXII TAKING A CHANCE	399
LXXXIII AGAINST PERFECT DEFENSE	404
LXXXIV LUCK-CONFOUNDED	408
NEW YORK THEATREGOERS PRIZE BRIDGE CONTEST PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS . 415	

CHAPTER ONE

PASSING—FANCY!

WHAT is the "something" that makes Bridge so appealing to the tired business man? Why does a man rush to his Club to get in a few rubbers before dinner? The probable reason is that the problems of business and of bridge are very much alike, with the important difference that an error in judgment is usually a costly matter in business while at bridge it means comparatively nothing. Unless the player is "bawled out" by his partner, he quickly forgets his bad plays, while the clever play that wins the rubber is fully as pleasing for the moment as the most successful business deal. It is often surprising how a brilliant professional man, will fall down lamentably on a simple situation at the bridge table, when ordinarily, logical reasoning, as applied to everyday, prosaic affairs would not permit him to go amiss. Recently, I saw a hand bid by one of the bright lights of the legal profession, that worked out very badly. I at once made up my mind that if I ever succumbed to a homicidal impulse, when my partner rescues me from an original Spade bid, notwithstanding his holding of four to the Queen, that I would not engage that lawyer to defend me.

While a beginner could hardly be expected to bid the hand correctly, it was a distant shock to find but one out of eight Club players that were capable of applying

the line of reasoning that would seem elementary in a court of law.

♠ Q J 6
♥ A K
♦ A
♣ A Q J 10 7 6 2

Admittedly a "tricky" hand in any position, it was especially so at Fourth Hand, when the first two players had passed and Third Hand bid one No Trump. As we plaintively ask over the radio, "what should Fourth Hand do and why?" The real bridge fan will at once take out his pencil and write down his bid before reading further. The prevailing bids of the semi-experts were, two, three, four and five Clubs; two and three No Trumps; double! Of course, the double devotees had no hope of the partner leaving the double in and merely doubled as a strategic move. No matter what bid the partner made, Clubs or No Trumps would be bid on the next round.

Let us cross-examine the bidding and see if we can determine what procedure should produce the greatest number of points. A No Trump bid by Third Hand after two passes is never a perfunctory thing. A good chance for game is looked for, even with the partner's original pass. That the Ace-King of Spades and the King of Clubs is with the No Trump bidder is practically established. So, game at Clubs is hopeless. At No Trump, the chances are much better. If the opening lead should be a Heart, the game can hardly be lost. The odds, however, are two to one that either a Diamond or a Spade will be the opening lead against a bid of two No Trumps. With such an opening, the way to game will be hard and tortuous and, as a

matter of fact, the hand was played at two No Trumps and defeated by three tricks, partly due to expert defense by the adversaries, although a two-trick penalty was in store for the Declarant after the first lead was made.

The deal:

		♠ 9 7 5 4	
		♥ J 6 4 3	
		♦ 7 6 5 3	
		♣ 5	
♠ 8 3			♠ A K 10 2
♥ 10 7 5 2			♥ Q 9 8
♦ J 9 8 4 2			♦ K Q 10
♣ 9 3			♣ K 8 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>WEST</p> <p>EAST</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>		
		♠ Q J 6	
		♥ A K	
		♦ A	
		♣ A Q J 10 7 6 2	

On the Diamond opening, Declarant could do nothing but clear the Clubs. West overtook his partner's third lead of Diamonds and South was forced to discard four perfectly good Clubs to keep the Spade suit guarded. After the Diamonds were gathered in, South was stuck in with the Heart and was not permitted to make a Spade trick.

If the deal had been played at Clubs, the Declarant was entitled to only three odd tricks. Whether West opened a Spade and ruffed the third round or South was compelled to lead away from that suit, proper defense would hold him down to nine tricks, a matter of 18 points towards the game. In my opinion, South's proper bid at

inal Trump lead would have set the Hand another trick. When our team mates played the East-West cards, the bidding started with one Diamond by South, four Spades by West and—silence reigned supreme. On this bidding, the Ace of Diamonds was the proper opening and the game was won by the Declarant without difficulty. I won't comment on the original Diamond bid, except to remark how curiously and often such topless bids work out in exactly this way. The preëmptive Spade bid of four was far better than three. Such bids should be always for the limit. A bid of four would have been just enough to shut out the Club bid at my table and, while the Club opening would have defeated the contract for one trick, a substantial gain would have been made over the score actually registered. It will be noted that our score on this deal was not the maximum that could be made. A bid of six Clubs could be made against any defense and would probably have been doubled by the opponents. The Diamond suit in the South Hand could have been established and afforded discards for the losing Hearts. East, without a card of reëntry, could never regain the lead to make a Heart trick.

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CHAPTER TWO

DISCARD AND DISCORD

TO play Bridge with outstanding success, either on the offense or defense, at least one phase of the modern game must be thoroughly mastered—the discards! When the novice holds a suit consisting of three worthless cards and is compelled to discard on the Declarant's long suit, it appears to him that he might as well throw away the cards that he knows cannot win any tricks. He forgets that the partner's cards are equally important with his own and that it is incumbent upon the player to protect his partner in every possible way. If the player held a Queen, three and two of a suit he would know that it was poor play to discard from such a holding—if he were a player of the knowing kind. When the adversary's suit is solid, then the opposing discards are immaterial, but if a finesse must be taken, the way to a winning finesse is made certain, unless thoughtful consideration is given to the discards by both of the defending players. I have seen players who considered themselves quite in the expert class, throw away their last card in an unplayed suit and leave their unfortunate partners wide open to any finesse on the first play of that suit. It is obvious that four cards headed by the Jack, will prove a stopper against the adversary's long suit containing the three top honors, provided the partner follows sufficiently long to prevent an adverse finesse.

West dealt and bid a No Trump, North and East passed, South bid two Spades and West went to three Clubs. After a pass by North, East called three No Trumps which secured the contract without further bidding. The Queen of Spades was opened, Dummy played the eight and South overtook with the King and continued with the Jack. When North did not follow, the trick was taken by the Ace and the Club suit run off. To the Declarant the hand appears simply a guess as to whether South holds the Ace of Hearts or the King of Diamonds. If North holds the Ace of Hearts, then ten tricks and game can be won without resorting to the Diamond finesse. If North holds the King of Diamonds, game can still be easily made. Should neither card of reëntry be with South, he cannot get in to make the Spades, and whatever Declarant does will be right. Of course, the situation to South is not hard to read. West has bid a No Trump with only two worthless Spades and either holds the Diamonds solid or has a finesse against North that will prove a winner. To prevent this finesse and induce a Heart lead is the one hope to save the game. South, therefore, discards on the third and fourth Club tricks two of his perfectly good Spades. That a player will discard from his set-up suit when he holds a sure reëntry card of an Ace, seems highly improbable and the Declarant is forced to believe that the Ace is not in the South hand. On the fifth Club, South discards the two of Hearts, making it appear that he is guarding a Diamond reëntry and the Heart lead being forthcoming, enables him to defeat the contract for one trick. That North helped the partnership along by discarding the eight of Hearts is worthy of note. Unless South has a Heart reëntry, the game is lost and North knows that a false discard by him cannot

effect his partner's play. The attention of the student might be directed to West's original bid. The better bid of a Club, would have resulted in East bidding the No Trump and the natural play of the opponents, gives East an easy game. North winning the first Spade trick with the singleton Queen effectively shuts out the balance of the suit.

CHAPTER THREE

FOUR-CARD SUIT-BIDS

THE outstanding innovation of up-to-date Auction Bridge is undoubtedly the four-card suit bids. Of course, it is preferable to hold five cards or more in suit before making a bid, but many game-going hands are lost by the conservative bridge player who refuses to stir up the animals unless he has five prongs to his pitch-fork. Many years ago I strongly advocated an opening bid on a four-card suit, headed by the Ace and King, but aside from the desultory support of a few ranking players, the idea was condemned as entirely too radical.

Lately, the subject has evoked considerable interest and discussion. A number of the best-known authorities admit the soundness of an opening four-card suit bid, but insist upon certain strength in the side-suits to compensate for the deficiency in length.

Some time ago, in the Auction Bridge Magazine, my esteemed confrère, Milton C. Work, gave a table showing the side strength required, when the suit bid consists of only four cards. With a suit headed by the Ace and King, Work believes at least an Ace or King-Queen should be held on the side.

He quotes from a very able article by Commander Winfield Liggett, Jr., as follows:

"The fact must be taken in consideration that some of our leading authorities, among whom I will mention both Lenz and Whitehead, tend towards lighter requirements. . . . On the whole, however, the table given by Mr. Work should not be shaded to any great extent, certainly not by more than half a trick, if game is the chief consideration."

Liggett hits the nail full on the head in his closing sentence—"If game is the chief consideration."

As a matter of fact, game is the last consideration that should influence the four-card suit bidder.

I am frank to admit, that if a player can bid only because of a minimum four-card suit bid from the partner, the game will be won on that hand very rarely indeed.

The four-card suit bids offer three major advantages:

First: A directive lead.

Second: A safe double.

Third: A shut out of an opposing No Trump.

Taking up these points one by one:

If the dealer passes a four-card suit headed by the Ace-King and Second Hand has a thoroughly sound bid, how often will the leader have a good opening lead?

If the leader must guess between two or three openings, and the result of the game hinges on one trick, what are the chances of saving the game?

After having passed, is it not too dangerous to direct a lead, with a bid of two?

I have seen this last thing done many times by players who would not think of making opening bids on four card suits and yet, when the rubber was in jeopardy, they did not hesitate to stick in a belated bid that was set for hundreds of points.

		♠ J 5 2	
		♥ Q 10 8	
		♦ K 7 3	
		♣ Q J 9 7	
♠ A K Q 10 6			♠ 9 8 3
♥ J 9 3			♥ 7 6 2
♦ 10 6			♦ A Q J 9
♣ 8 3 2			♣ A K 10
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
		♠ 7 4	
		♥ A K 5 4	
		♦ 8 5 4 2	
		♣ 6 5 4	

Holding the South hand, I dealt and bid a heart, which was overcalled with two Spades: "One" would have been sufficient to secure the contract.

After three rounds of Hearts, it looked very much like closing up shop, but the great strength in Dummy left no alternative but a Heart continuation. The Declarant could not now prevent the Jack of Spades from making a trick and had to be content with the three odd, one short of game.

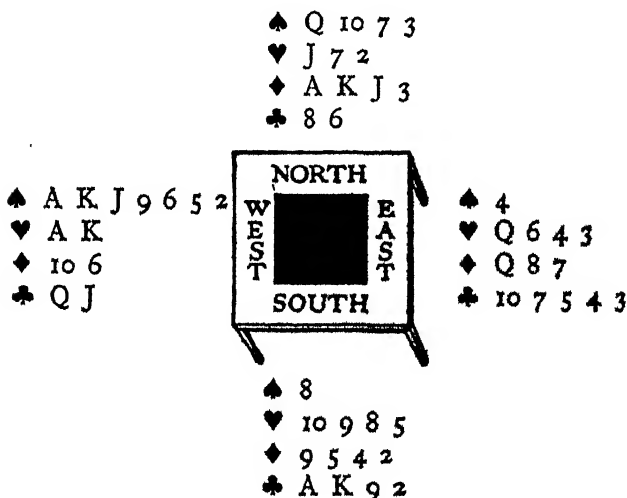
If the Heart had not been bid, the logical Club opening would have permitted Declarant to gather in twelve tricks, Small Slam, 80 honors, game, rubber, match, caddy and cigars.

Score one for the system!

On the second point, "a safe double," it must be remembered that the essential requirements, two sure tricks for a bid, are not shaded in any way. If anything,

their "sureness" are enhanced by reason of the shortness. A four-card suit is less likely to be ruffed than one of greater length.

If the opponents overbid their hands, the partner can double safely, when such a course would have been impossible if the original bidder had passed, or made a secondary bid.



This hand is taken from a duplicate match, South having the deal and bidding a Club at a number of tables and passing at others. West, in most cases, bid three Spades and secured the contract, which was set two tricks. The only difference was, where South bid the Clubs, North doubled the contract and obtained the double penalty. With a pass by South, a double by North would be unwarranted, as three Spades would score only 27 points, whereas the doubled contract if made, would score 229 points. While the chances to defeat the bid are

about even,—notwithstanding a pass from partner,—it is very poor judgment to gamble over eight to one, on an even chance.

On the third count, “shutting out an opposing No Trump,” we all are aware how often a hand will be able to take in nine tricks, whether played at a suit make or at No Trumps. Three odd, however, mean nothing at a suit make, unless the score is advanced, while at No Trumps it means the game. With four cards to the Ace-King in an opposing hand, the chances are not very good that a possible No Trump call will hold two stops in that suit. The percentage against even one “stopper” would be more than two to one.

	♠ K 9 7 5 2	
	♥ 9 6 4 2	
	♦ J 3	
	♣ 6 5	
♠ A J 4 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WEST</div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl;">EAST</div> </div> SOUTH </div>	♠ Q 8
♥ Q 8		♥ J 7 5
♦ A K 9 2		♦ Q 10 8 6
♣ A K 4		♣ Q 10 8 2
	♠ 10 6	
	♥ A K 10 3	
	♦ 7 5 4	
	♣ J 9 7 3	

Holding this hand, South bid a Heart and West doubled informatively, hoping for a Spade bid from partner. The hand was played at Diamonds and four odd was the maximum score.

If played at No Trumps, the game was a certainty against any defense. That West should bid No Trumps, notwithstanding the lack of a Heart stopper, is a specious argument. While it would work out well in this case, it might easily be a game-loser in the next dozen instances.

In my opinion, the four-card suit bid is a sound convention, when made first or second hand, and when playing with a partner who understands the system in play.

Under such conditions, tricks in side suits are not a necessity.

CHAPTER FOUR

PLAYS THAT WIN GAMES

THE egg comes from the chicken; the chicken comes from the egg. Which came first? This wise drollery was probably one of the first ten jokes in existence. Modernized a bit to apply to Bridge, it goes like this: You can't play without proper bidding; unless you play correctly, it is useless to bid. Which is most important? Only two guesses permitted!

The player who can play every hand for the maximum number of tricks is undoubtedly in a better position to overbid, than the one who loses a trick every so often. At Duplicate Auction, poor bidding and bad play show up an unsound player to such an extent, that many will not play the duplicate form of game at all. They much prefer straight Bridge where their heavy losses can be charged to hard luck and the other fellows holding all the good cards.

Playing in a fifteen table duplicate game, I selected four pairs, that appeared to have the "class," to finish well up in the lead. After the game, the difference between the highest and lowest score was 3160 points. The difference, however, between the five leaders was only 120 points and three of the four designated pairs were among the elect. After nearly four hours of play, with all the variations of bidding and playing, it seemed almost uncanny that the final result could be so close.

One of the deals that showed a difference of 340 points brought out a rather laughable situation. A player who had been set for a hundred points felt a bit aggrieved at my good luck in making the game on the same hand. "It's a good bet," he grouched, "that you didn't get the same bidding on the hand that I did. If you had, you would not have found it so easy to make the game."

There was something in what he said, so I offer the hand for the delectation of all lucky players:

	♠ A 10 4 2	
	♥ 5	
	♦ Q 8 6 3	
	♣ K 7 6 2	
♠ K Q J 8	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ 9 7 5
♥ K 4		♥ J 8 7
♦ 7 5 4 2		♦ A K 10 9
♣ J 9 4		♣ Q 10 8
	♠ 6 3	
	♥ A Q 10 9 6 3 2	
	♦ J	
	♣ A 5 3	

East was the dealer and, against Mr. Hardluck South, started with a Diamond. South bid a Heart, West a Spade and North went No Trump. East passed, South bid two Hearts, West three Diamonds, which North doubled. South, with his freak distribution, went to three Hearts and this bid West doubled. There was no further bidding and the King of Spades was opened and won by the Ace.

The Queen of Hearts was finessed to the King and after making one Spade trick West led a Diamond, which East took with the King and returned the last Spade. The Declarant lost a Club, Diamond, Spade and two Hearts. While the Diamond contract of the opponents would have been defeated, South's long line of Hearts justified his return to that suit.

When the deal came to my table, I held the South hand. The exiguous holding of the enemy did not prevent them from pushing us up to four Hearts. My partner did not double the bid of three Diamonds, but East, nevertheless, switched back to three Spades. I ventured to four Hearts and West doubled, which closed the bidding. To this point I did not appear to have much the better of the battle.

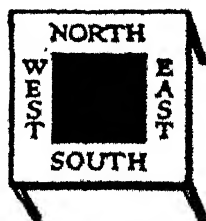
The opponents' play seemed to be quite normal. The King of Spades was taken with the Ace and the nine of Hearts was finessed—instead of the Queen. This play seems marked as West's double locates the King of Hearts in his hand, while the position of the Jack is in doubt. West won with the King, made a trick in Spades and then led the Diamond. East won with the King and returned the Spade. It will be noted that every play was precisely the same as at the other table, except the deep trump finesse, which of course saves one trick. At first glance it does not seem that the balance of the tricks can be made, but careful play enables South to force a double squeeze position. After ruffing the Spade, all the trumps are played out. When South leads the last trump he holds three Clubs remaining in his hand. The Dummy holds two Clubs, a Diamond and a Spade. West holds three Clubs and one Spade, but is compelled to discard a Club to prevent the Spade making in dummy. Dummy now gives

up the Spade and East must unguard his Clubs or give up the Ace of Diamonds. Either play is fatal and the doubled contract of ten tricks is made against good defense, notwithstanding the failure of the first pair to make their contract of nine tricks.

Another deal that appeared to go very well, showed a loss of over 200 points:

♠ 8 6
♥ 10 4
♦ 7 4 2
♣ Q J 10 7 5 2

♠ 10 7 5 3 2
♥ 8 6 2
♦ 8 6 5 3
♣ 3



♠ K J 4
 ♥ K Q 5 3
 ♦ K Q 10
 ♣ K 9 6

♠ A Q 9
 ♥ A J 9 7
 ♦ A J 9
 ♣ A 8 4

South, as dealer, started off with two No Trumps and secured the contract without competition. This was the same hard-luck player of the previous deal. The Spade was opened and the King went to the Ace. Declarant led the Ace and low Club but East refused to win the trick, effectually shutting out the suit. South, with good judgment, at once abandoned the Clubs and led the ten of Hearts. This line of play permitted him to make his contract of eight tricks, instead of being set on the hand.

At my table I bid one No Trump, my partner passed,

and East doubled informatively. I redoubled, West bid two Spades, North three Clubs, East passed and I went to three No Trumps. This bid was passed to East, who doubled, this time for business. The Spade opening was the same as at the other table, but instead of leading the Ace of Clubs, I started with a low one. Whether or not East wins the trick is immaterial. If the King goes up, the hand plays itself. If East holds off, the Queen is returned and the finesse taken. Even eliminating the double, when East follows to the second round of Clubs, West is marked out. With the King and low of the suit, West would have gone up on the first round. If the Queen holds the second round of Clubs, then the switch to the Hearts is made and three tricks each in Hearts and Clubs, two in Spades and one in Diamonds lands the game against any kind of defensive play.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FICKLE GODDESS

ONE reason why Auction Bridge has such a hold upon the public is because a player may lose rubber after rubber and still retain his self-respect, while his winning sessions generate in him a glow of righteous self-approbation.

From time immemorial, a losing card-player seemed to feel in duty bound to blame his ill-luck. Why should he lose his self-esteem when he never held any good cards; when his partners always threw him down; when the cards with fiendish ingenuity, persisted in lying in the wrong position? True, he occasionally lost a trick by bad play, but who could be expected to play perfectly when everything went against him?

It is curious how different the aspect is to the winner. Of course, a little luck must be admitted, "but after all, partner dear, we played the cards pretty well."

The percentage of Bridge Players, who are willing to admit that the factor of luck is about even, is very small. Personally, I thoroughly believe that in the long run "luck" will just about average itself and the players who make what they can when in a bad slump and press their luck when they get the breaks, will prove to be consistent winners at the end of a given period, always provided that their standard of skill is equal to that of the general run of the company they usually play with.

Even at Duplicate Auction, I have heard players complaining bitterly at the fortunate opportunities that fall to the favorites of the fickle Goddess, while they "never get a chance."

Sometimes indeed, a player may drowse off and entirely miss the knock of opportunity, as happened recently in a match I played in.

Here is the hand:

	♠ K 6 4	
	♥ K J 10 4 2	
	♦ 8 4	
	♣ K Q J	
♠ A J 9 8 7 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div>	♠ Q 10 5
♥ 7 5		♥ Q 8 3
♦ —		♦ K Q 5 2
♣ 9 8 5 4 3		♣ A 10 7
	♠ 3	
	♥ A 9 6	
	♦ A J 10 9 7 6 3	
	♣ 6 2	

The deal was with East, who bid a No Trump, which I passed, Second Hand.

West went to two Spades, North and East passed and I now bid three Diamonds. West called three Spades and North and East again passed. It looked as though the game was in jeopardy so I declared four Diamonds, which was passed to East, who bid four Spades. I had reached my limit, but my partner came to life and doubled. This closed the bidding and the contract was defeated for two

hundred points, less 40 honors. The King of Clubs was opened and taken with the Ace. Then the King of Diamonds was led and covered with the Ace. West trumped it but could not get back into East's hand to take a needed Heart discard on the Queen of Diamonds, until we had cashed in our winners. The opening of the Club instead of the Diamond was proper. It is always better to play for certainties than for probabilities. The Club opening could not do any harm and the Diamond might—and would—have lost a trick.

After the game was over there was considerable discussion over the bidding on this board. At most tables the bidding was identical until the "four-Diamond bid" reached East. In a number of cases the Diamonds were doubled by East. One South player was greatly grieved that he had the "bad luck" to play the hand against "fine players," who elected to double him instead of going on with the Spades.

"Here I bid a hand exactly as you did," he grumbled, "and get stung for a hundred points, while you set the other fellow for two hundred. If that isn't blind luck, I miss my guess."

Looking over the East hand carefully, it seems a close point whether, after the partner has bid and gone on with his bid, a double of four Diamonds would not be a better chance than supporting the Spades. With a favorable distribution, the game at Spades may be made easily and in that event the raise will doubtless be more profitable than the double. However, the Spade contract cannot be made as the cards happen to lie, so it appears that there is some truth in the contention that in this instance "luck" has shown an unkind discrimination against some players and in favor of others.

I use "appears" advisedly, because it is the other way around! The players who had their four Diamonds doubled were beshowered with luck, as proper play will permit them to make their contract against any defense and score 261 points instead of 160 that is netted by the Spade double. The only play in the hand is the finesse of the eight of Diamonds if East does not put up an honor and if he does, the second honor is forced out and the small trumps picked up. The original No Trump bid and the final double should mark the holding of East's hand without difficulty.

Again "bad luck" and "bad play" are synonymous!

Not for one moment do I contend that there is no such thing as luck, but I do say that at least half the time "luck" is blamed for indifferent play.

As an example of what I consider real, unadulterated bad luck, I offer the following hand:

♠ Q 7 3
♥ K 10 9
♦ 8 4
♣ A 8 7 6 3

♠ A J 6
♥ 7 4
♦ K Q J 10 6 5 3
♣ 4

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ K 8 5 4 2
♥ 8 6 5 3 2
♦ —
♣ K 5 2

♠ 10 9
♥ A Q J
♦ A 9 7 2
♣ Q J 10 9

South bid one No Trump and there was no further bidding. The King of Diamonds was opened and East discarded the two of Clubs. South won with the Ace and could have taken in five tricks before relinquishing the lead. If, however, the King of Clubs is in the West hand, nine tricks and the game can be made. Under such conditions hardly one player in ten would refuse to take the finesse, but in this case the King was with East and the adversaries gathered in the balance of the tricks—the Declarant taking but one trick and having a Small Slam scored against him.

If South had made his three Hearts before taking the Club finesse and found the King right, he still could not have made the game as the long Club in dummy would have been blocked.

However, two Heart tricks might have been taken, before burning all bridges, but in times of stress what is two tricks among friends! When the location of only one card makes a difference of eight tricks in a hand, then we can only bow to the inevitable and trust for a more kindly fate.

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CHAPTER SIX

WHY ORIGINAL BIDS SHOULD HAVE QUICK TRICKS

PROBABLY the most difficult thing for the average Auction Player to understand is why he must not open the bidding with a long string of cards headed by a King, when lacking other top-card strength. Every day they see admittedly good players making original bids on four-card Ace-King suits and a generally worthless hand outside. "Surely," they reason, "a hand should be good for more tricks with a seven-card suit headed by the King-Jack, than with only a four-card suit to the Ace-King."

Undoubtedly their contention is quite true, but they lose sight of the fact that there are wide open spaces, between making a bid and obtaining the final contract. Long experience has proven that it is much more valuable information for the partner to know that the bidder has two quick tricks and at least four cards in suit, than that he has a preference for a certain suit—other things being indefinite.

When the greatest possibilities for gain lie in doubling the opposing bid, of what avail is it to the player to find his partner with a long, weak suit that cannot possibly be brought in and no quick tricks at all in support of a double? As a matter of comparison:

♠ K J 9 6 5 4 3
♠ A K Q 2

Hearts. East passed and South, with only one Heart, was compelled to bid two Spades. West now called three Diamonds and North tried three Hearts, which East doubled. Having been twice rescued by his partner, South held his peace, but West went on to four Diamonds, which North doubled. After East and South had passed, West "redoubled," and now the full force of South's iniquitous bid was brought home to him. With Diamonds as trumps, he held no tricks to assist his partner in defeating the redoubled contract, notwithstanding his original bid. With faint hope that he might escape a double he bid four Spades. West, of course, doubled, and defeated the contract 400 points. At Hearts the contract would have fared as badly and at Diamonds the opponents would have made their bid of four, losing only two trumps and one Spade trick.

With a Spade opening West should win the trick and at once return a losing Spade. If North trumps with the ten, shutting out Dummy's eight and leads a trump, he will obtain the same result as if he permits Dummy to take the ruff. Should North open with the King of Hearts, the Declarant will win in Dummy with the Ace and finesse the Spade. A low Spade will now bring about the same situation as an original Spade opening.

With correct bidding, the chance of getting in such difficulties is very much diminished, South passing, West would bid a Diamond, North a Heart and South a Spade. Both North and South are justified in at least one rebid and possibly two, but when West gets to four Diamonds, North should not double, as his partner, having passed originally, disclaims two quick tricks. While it seems that West's contract may be defeated, it is not worth while to double and jeopardize the game for an added fifty points.

trick for North, although expert play by West might have saved it. The King of Clubs is won by the Ace and the King of Hearts is taken in the dummy. The Diamond finesse is lost to the King and North now leads the nine of Clubs. West draws one round of trumps and forces North's top trump with the Diamond. The Declarant is ruffed with the Queen of Hearts and loses the nine of Diamonds at the end. If North had been permitted to hold the trick when he led the King of Hearts he would have been in distress. His best play would have been the nine of Clubs. The Declarant would have taken two rounds and stuck him back in the lead with his last trump. Now, if North leads any card but the King of Diamonds West must take the balance of the tricks.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE OPTIMIST

A GAIN and again this question is hurled at the experts—"Does not the bidding mean everything at Bridge?" And usually the question is answered in the affirmative. Undoubtedly this is true with beginners because, without a sound foundation to start on, the player can hardly hope to arrive anywhere. When, however, the novice has passed through the elementary stage and considers himself at least an average player, the ability to play the cards for the greatest number of tricks is essentially the basis of further progress.

To bid a hand correctly for the maximum number of tricks that can be made by perfect play is assuredly a fine and wonderful thing, but of what avail is it when the excellent bidder is quite unable to produce the perfect play? The real good fun and fascination of the game comes in playing a border-line hand to the best advantage and scoring a glorious victory on a deal that apparently is doomed to hopeless defeat. In most sessions of play some hands crop up that are properly bid, and could be easily made on the normal distribution of the opposing cards. The first inkling that the player has of trouble to come, is when his contract is doubled and the nature of his hand should warn him that the trump strength is massed against him. To become panic-stricken and concede defeat is hardly the proper spirit. The partner can only give his moral support, but he has a right to expect his *vis-a-vis* to put up as valiant a battle as he is capable of.

It is surprising how often a hand can be won by taking full advantage of the information given by the double, even when the defense is of high order. Possibly the most cheerful player in the world, when adversity strikes him, is Major C. L. Patton, the genial President of the Knickerbocker Whist Club. The Major, always hoping for the best, gets out on a limb—occasionally—and is doubled by the enemy. His partner puts down a hand that would chill the soul of a Hero. Two little trumps, a Queen and a couple of Jacks and the Major fairly glows. "Fine, Partner, fine," he coos. "Your cards fit in wonderfully." The opponents somehow feel they have made a mistake in doubling and in their anxiety to defeat the hand, they are glad to take a penalty of one trick, when they might have had four. On the following hand the Major held the South cards and required rather more than a bold front to win the game:

	♠ J 8	
	♥ K Q 9 7 5 2	
	♦ A 5 2	
	♣ 7 4	
♠ 6		♠ K Q 9 3 2
♥ A J 10 8 6		♥ 4
♦ 9 7 6 3		♦ K Q J 10
♣ 9 5 2		♣ J 10 6
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>W E</p> <p>S T</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>	
	♠ A 10 7 5 4	
	♥ 3	
	♦ 8 4	
	♣ A K Q 8 3	

South had the deal and bid a Spade. West passed and North called two Hearts. East passed and South now bid three Clubs. After West passed, North went back to Spades, which East doubled and all hands passed. To make three-odd tricks in Spades, with the unusual distribution against him, needed exceptional play, but the Major was quite equal to the occasion. The logical Diamond opening was made and taken by the Ace. This was the best defensive opening in the hand as it prevented the Declarant from discarding his losing Diamond on a good Heart, while the adversaries five-card trump hand was being forced. If the hand had not been doubled, the best continuation would have been to take two rounds of trumps. Even with four trumps in one of the opposing hands, the contract would have been safe, while an even split would have landed the game. With the double by East, there is a strong probability of five trumps being in that hand, in which case a trump lead will lose three Spades, one Diamond and a Heart, defeating the contract by a trick. There is, also, the possibility that the Club suit will not break, in which case the loss will be considerably greater. If the Clubs are evenly divided, which affords the only chance for game, that suit should be gone after at once. On the third round of Clubs, dummy discards a Diamond, and on the fourth round, notwithstanding that West trumps with his singleton trump, the last Diamond in dummy is shed. Now, if West had had a trump to lead, then East could have had but four and the game would be won without further trouble. Not having another trump, West is forced to lead the Ace of Hearts, following with a low one. It is not necessary to play one of the equals, as South cannot know that East is void and must go up with an honor anyway. The Heart

with the King, returned the Diamonds and South ruffed the third round. Now, the eight of Hearts was finessed to the Queen and another Diamond ruff put Declarant in to lead the Queen of Spades. If the ten of Spades is with East, it makes little difference what Spade is led, but if the ten is alone with West, there is a good chance for the game. East won with the Ace and, having no more Diamonds, led the Queen of Clubs. South won with the Ace, pulled down the two remaining trumps and the second Heart finesse enabled him to discard the two losing Clubs. Aside from the lead of the Queen of Spades—a play which might win, but could not lose—the lead of the eight of Hearts was the outstanding play. If the ten were led, West might be tempted to cover, which would ruin the hand irrevocably. If, at the second trick, East had permitted the Jack to “ride,” the result would have been very different. A Diamond bid by West, instead of the No Trump, would have made the way easy. The game at Diamonds could hardly be lost, and if East took out with a No Trump, a Spade opening made the hand good for eleven tricks. If East bid the Spade, then West could safely go to his No Trump.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHEN INFORMATORY DOUBLES SHOULD BE LEFT IN

UNLESS the flagrant abuse of the informatory double is curtailed before long, it is possible that this useful device may be relegated to the scrap bag, together with the archaic conventions of the long ago. It seems that most players, when they are puzzled what to do after an opponent has made a bid that is particularly ill-adapted to their hand, double informatory, to see what will happen. It is just as likely that the Jugger-naut thus started will crush the instigator under a five hundred point penalty, as that it will cause any damage to the adversary. A double that is used for information, should fulfill its purpose by giving information of value. That the hand can support a bid made by the partner is not enough; quick tricks—Aces and Kings—is the important thing and negative information is only important to the enemy. When the partner holds high-card values, it usually does not require a double to goad him into making a bid.

Possibly, the least understood feature of the informatory double is the proper action of the partner of the doubler. The general supposition of the average player is, that a bid of some suit must be made. The partner

having commanded, they must obey! I wonder if it would be considered homicide to ask such a person to leap off from a tall building?

The advisability of leaving in the partner's informatory double should always be considered when the doubler's partner holds a good hand! Only when holding a poor hand should a bid always be made! The poorer the hand the surer the bid! With an exceptionally bad hand, the partner will probably be correspondingly strong, but in such a position the loss is always minimized by inserting a bid. When large losses are taken, it is usually proven that the fault is caused by an unsound double. When, however, the pleasant situation comes up of holding two strong hands against the opponent, what can be better than permitting the player to struggle along at a hundred points penalty for every trick that the contract is set? This is especially true when the enemy No Trump bid is doubled and the partner of the doubler has better than an average hand, fairly distributed. In such a position, two quick tricks, divided in three suits, should be quite sufficient to allow the double to remain in. The unspeakable atrocity of bidding "two No Trumps" when confronted with a situation of this kind is harrowing. Why players desire to play from a disadvantageous position at odds of ten to one is very difficult to understand, and yet innumerable snappy players will gaily bid two No Trumps on their partner's double, when a simple pass will net them hundreds of points. The hand following is not of an unusual type and the player who sat North would be considered at least an average player:

	♠ A 9 7	
	♥ A 7 3	
	♦ J 5 2	
	♣ K 7 5 3	
♠ 8 5 4 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ J 10 3
♥ 9 5 4 2		♥ K 8
♦ 6 4 3		♦ K 10 9
♣ 6 2		♣ A Q J 8 4
	♠ K Q 6	
	♥ Q J 10 6	
	♦ A Q 8 7	
	♣ 10 9	

East dealt and bid a No Trump. I sat South and doubled. West passed and North, without a tremor, bid two No Trumps. The Queen of Clubs was the opening lead and after that, correct play by the Declarant should score eight tricks—a matter of twenty points. As the hand was played, the error of taking two rounds of Diamonds before the Hearts were set, necessitated the Heart finesse to try for the game, with the sad result that the contract was defeated by one trick. The bidding almost positively marks East with the King of Hearts and, if this card is gotten out of the way at once, the contract must be made. However, the important thing for the bridge student to consider is what would have occurred if North had passed the double, notwithstanding that it was of the informative variety. The first consideration should be that East is in between two powerful hands and loses a hundred points for each trick he is set. That North, by bidding, obligates

the taking of eight tricks and can score but ten points per by-trick. That playing the hand against East, the opening attack is with South and such strategic position is worth at least an extra trick. That North, in addition to holding two and a half quick tricks, can give excellent support to any opening lead that the partner can make.

Playing the hand at one No Trump doubled East will be set 400 points and if he makes the mistake of discarding one Diamond, instead of two of his perfectly good set-up Clubs, the "strafe" will be 500. The opening lead of the Queen of Hearts should be allowed to ride to the King, as, even if the King is not guarded, the nine of Hearts in dummy will stop the suit. East will play two rounds of Clubs and, if he does not discard the Clubs on the two rounds of Hearts, he will be compelled to do so on the Spades. Should East play perfectly and hold for his last four cards, three Diamonds and one Club, North's play would be to put him in with the Club and force him to lead the Diamonds. This line of play would set the hand 400 points.

	♠ Q J 6	
	♥ Q 8 7	
	♦ A K 7 3	
	♣ 5 4 2	
♠ 7 4 3		♠ A 9 2
♥ J 5 4		♥ 10 6 3 2
♦ J 6 2		♦ 9 8 5
♣ A 9 8 7		♣ K J 10
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 150px;"> NORTH WEST EAST <div style="background-color: black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div>	
	♠ K 10 8 5	
	♥ A K 9	
	♦ Q 10 4	
	♣ Q 6 3	

It is not strange that, when a player bids on the minimum values, with but four-card suits, the play of the hands demand perfect treatment to land the game.

West was the dealer and passed. North bid a Diamond, East passed and South secured the contract for one No Trump. The seven of Clubs was opened, won by the King and the Jack returned. It appears hopeless to cover with the Queen, as the play cannot make a card good for either the Declarant or his dummy, but there is just one chance to save the game and that is by covering. East is known to hold exactly three Clubs, and if the missing card is the ten, West will be blocked from making the long card in his suit. The Ace of Spades is probably not with West, as he passed originally, although he is known to hold the Ace of Clubs. The reason East must hold three Clubs is that the seven was led, showing four cards higher not in the leader's hand. Only three have appeared, hence, East must hold the fourth.

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CHAPTER NINE

SCINTILLATING PLAY

POSSIBLY sixty percent of the deals at Bridge are merely "duds." Unless the players are considerably below the average standard of play the outcome of such hands should not be subject to a great deal of variation. With fair intelligence in bidding and a simple working knowledge of natural finessing, there is little excuse for any player to mess up hands of this kind. It is on the forty percent minority hands that the good player has an opportunity to show his skill. Careful play in unblocking and keeping the lead in the proper hand; elimination plays, forcing discards and taking full advantage of inferences, all tend to win games for the advanced player, that are lost to the tyro.

Not more than eight percent of the hands lend themselves to treatment of an extraordinary character. In the course of a session of play, two or three hands may appear where the Grand Coup, the Squeeze or some similar *outré* play must be employed to win a game that could not otherwise be won. In the long run, it is throwing these games from the losing to the winning side of the ledger that makes for outstanding success at Auction Bridge.

Aside from the situations that occur sufficiently often to be put under a special category, one of the most consistent trick winners is the ability to assist the enemy into

making a wrong guess. I am frank to confess that, had I been the Declarant on the following hand I would have fallen into the self-same trap that he did:

	♠ 7		
	♥ 10 9		
	♦ A Q J 8 6 4 2		
	♣ K J 3		
♠ Q J 10 9 4 3			♠ 8 6 5 2
♥ A J 6			♥ 8 7 5 4 3
♦ 5			♦ 9 7
♣ 8 4 2			♣ A Q

	♠ A K	
	♥ K Q 2	
	♦ K 10 3	
	♣ 10 9 7 6 5	

North dealt and bid a Diamond, East passed and South's No Trump landed the contract. West, having the lead with a good suit to open and a sure card of re-entry, would have shown bad judgment to bid his Spades.

North, holding a seven-card suit, might have rebid the Diamonds on the supposition that if his partner could not bid two No Trumps, the hand had better be played at Diamonds, but in any event, South would have gone on with the No Trump, after his partner had started an original bid. North, as compensation for the missing King of Diamonds must hold the Ace of Hearts or a high honor in Clubs.

The opening lead of the Queen of Spades was won by

the Ace. The false-card in this position is poor play. Both adversaries should know that South holds the King. West cannot hold it because the Queen is never led from the King-Queen. East, holding the King should play it on his partner's Queen at No Trumps. If the Declarant had won with the King instead of the Ace, East might mark the Ace with his partner, as the Queen is often the proper lead from an Ace, Queen, Jack combination. False-carding often defeats its purpose, when it is not done with careful fore-thought.

It is at once apparent that the game is in sight with the seven set-up Diamonds and two Spade tricks. There is no hurry, however, in running for the game, while South still has the Spades stopped. If the Queen of Clubs is with West and not over twice guarded, a Small Slam may be garnered before the opponents awake to their danger. With all suits well stopped, the best play seems to be the Club finesse. If the finesse loses and the Spades are cleared, then the Declarant must run for his game. On the lead of the ten of Clubs, Dummy played the three and East won with the—Ace! That the Declarant is trying for a slam is obvious to East. Unless South held the King of Diamonds himself, he would undoubtedly have played for that suit at once, instead of fooling with a suit in his hand, that lacked the four top honors. That South holds the King of Spades is patent and if he can be inveigled into continuing the Club play, after the last stopper in Spades is taken out of his hand, the game may yet be saved. Winning the Club trick with the Queen, forces the play into conventional lines, so East puts up the Ace and leads a Spade. Although the Spade suit is now cleared, the Declarant must mark the Queen of Clubs with West and has every reason to believe that

his play for a Small Slam will be successful. On the Club continuation, West played the eight and it appeared that the Queen would drop on the third round, if the Jack were played to the apparently proven finesse. It will be noted that when East's subtle coup proved successful, it not only saved the game, but actually defeated the contract for one trick.

Probably the most trying situation at Bridge comes when the opponent has made a preëmptive bid and snap judgment must be taken whether to fight or surrender. Much depends upon the ability of the player to escape with a minimum loss, when the partner has little assistance to offer and the trump strength is massed against him in the hand of one adversary.

	♠ 8 5 2	
	♥ 9 5 4	
	♦ 10 5	
	♣ J 7 6 5 2	
♠ Q J 7 6 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WEST EAST </div> SOUTH </div>	♠ —
♥ 10 7 6		♥ A K Q J 8 3 2
♦ 6 4 3		♦ J 9 8
♣ K Q		♣ A 9 4
	♠ A K 10 9 3	
	♥ —	
	♦ A K Q 7 2	
	♣ 10 8 3	

On this hand East had the deal and bid three Hearts. Proper preëmption calls for two tricks more than the hand is worth—so East's initial error started the trouble.

Whether South would have ventured to bid over four Hearts is problematical, but his three Spade bid was doubled by West with considerable gusto. The chance for game at doubled Spades, decided South against showing the Diamonds. If the second suit had been bid, the enemy would have gone on with the Hearts and have won the game with a big honor count.

West opened the ten of Hearts which was ruffed by the Declarant and the Diamond suit was started. That the double was made on trump strength is obvious and while the game seems hopeless, there is always the chance for the enemy to go wrong—if given the opportunity! On the third round of Diamonds, dummy discarded a Heart and on the fourth round, West trumped in with the Jack, knowing from the bidding that his partner could not have a trump. When dummy discarded his last Heart, West cashed in the two Clubs and then being well out of good leads, he played a Heart which dummy ruffed and South shed his last Club. Now a low trump puts Declarant in to lead the fifth Diamond and it takes the Queen of Spades to shut out the eight in dummy! Keen defense by East in overtaking the second Club and ruffing his partner, or by West in leading a trump instead of the second round of Hearts, would have saved the game, but perfect play is often conspicuous by its absence.

CHAPTER TEN

A LEADING QUESTION

IT is becoming more and more of an established fact among the better players, that saving the game on the close hands is dependent upon the opening lead. If it were possible for a player to pick the best opening lead for the combined hands on every deal, it would not be long before that player was considered invincible. The four-card minimum suit bids are primarily important, because they indicate to the partner, a suit that may be led without disadvantage.

In view of this, it is curious what a wide divergence of opinion exists as to the proper card to lead in response to the partner's bid. Playing against a No Trump contract, the leads have been standardized to such an extent that comparatively few players are at a loss as to their correct opening lead. When, however, the contract is at a suit make, then many players flounder around hopelessly and generally do the wrong thing. After all, the important thing to do is the thing that the partner will understand. One school of players believes that, when the partner has made a suit bid and has been overcalled by the following hand, that the best lead to make is the highest card of the suit bid by partner. Another school thinks that the high card should only be led when the suit consists of less than four cards. Both methods have adherents among the leading teachers and when experts

disagree, what can be expected from the general run of players? The first school believes that the important thing is to show the partner what the best card is that you hold in his suit. This is quite true when playing with beginners, but only of secondary importance when playing with advanced players. The advantage of knowing the length of the suit is usually of far greater value to the experienced player. Holding four cards of the partner's declared suit, the bottom card should be led unless the hand contains the Ace, the King-Queen or the Queen-Jack. Many situations arise where this method of play maps out the path definitely, while the other way leaves it entirely to guess-work. The following hand is an example of an ever occurring situation:

		♠ 10 8 7 4	
		♥ A 9	
		♦ 9 7 6 4	
		♣ 10 6 2	
♠ 9 5 3			♠ A J 2
♥ K Q J 6 4			♥ 10 8 3 2
♦ A K 8			♦ Q 10 5
♣ K 5			♣ Q 9 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E S T SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K Q 6	
		♥ 7 5	
		♦ J 3 2	
		♣ A J 8 4 3	

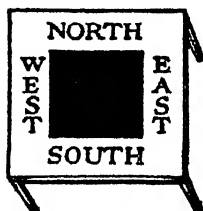
South had the deal and bid a Club, which was overcalled by West with a Heart. There was no further bidding and the ten of Clubs was opened. If North be a

player who always leads the top of the partner's suit, irrespective of length, what should South do when East plays low on the lead of the ten? The King of Clubs must be with West and if North has four Clubs, then West holds the singleton King. To finesse, or not to finesse, that is the question. I would be as puzzled as—Hamlet. It narrows down to a point where the game depends upon guessing whether North has four or less Clubs. Playing the system of low from a suit of four, the lead of the ten at once marks West with at least one other Club to the King and the finesse must be taken. It is obvious that the game will be lost if the Ace of Clubs is played to the first round, as the Declarant obtains a Spade discard on the Queen of Clubs in his dummy. Let us say that North held four Clubs and led the two. In such a position South would go up with the Ace and if the King did not fall, then it would be safe in North's hand and South could decide whether to lead back a low Club or shift to another suit. In the rare instances where the low card led is a singleton, there is usually something either in the bidding or the drop of the cards, that will enlighten the partner. Very often deals arise that require but perfunctory play to save the game, when the partners are not forced to guess as to the exact meaning of a specific lead. There can be no "exactness" when the top card is always led, regardless of number. In a recent match game a very neat hand was played that prettily illustrated the importance of number-showing leads. In conjunction with Milton C. Work, I was arranging a series of deals for an International Duplicate Tournament and thought this deal would make a good example hand. Mr. Work felt convinced that such a large majority of the players would lead the top-card

of the partner's declared suit and mess up the hand on the very first trick, that we decided to omit the deal from the competition. This hand is worthy of profound study.

♠ J 9 3
 ♥ 6 4 2
 ♦ K 9 7 2
 ♣ 10 6 3

♠ 10 5
 ♥ K Q J 10 8 5
 ♦ 5 3
 ♣ 8 7 2



♠ A Q 7 4
♥ 9 7
♦ J 8 6
♣ A K Q J

♠ K 8 6 2
♥ A 3
♦ A Q 10 4
♣ 9 5 4

East dealt and bid a Club. South bid a Diamond, West a Heart, North passed and East now bid a Spade. After South had passed, West secured the contract with a bid of two Hearts. There is little to the bidding, except the preference given to the original Club bid instead of the Spade. If West had held three little Spades and No Trump support, an original Spade bid might have bought the contract, while a game-going bid of No Trump would be very apt to result from the Club bid. There is no question but that North must open the Diamond suit. If the King is opened and continued, South must take three rounds in the hope that West holds three of the suit and the game will be saved. The play that saves game is the opening of the two of Diamonds. South wins with the Ace and returns

a low Diamond. North takes it with the King and although he knows West will be forced to ruff the next lead of Diamonds, a switch must be made to Spades. Unless South can win a trick in that suit and has a stopper in the trump suit, the game cannot be saved. It is usually too late to force an adversary when he holds a solid suit.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

LUCK

WHILE the element of luck enters largely into all card games, it is not the controlling factor at Auction Bridge that a great number of players seem to think. It must be admitted that its vagaries are often weird and inexplicable, but occasionally the "contributing something," of the players have much to do with its curious workings. I have seen every rubber won during an entire evening by the players choosing the blue cards: by the players winning the choice of seats and selecting the North and South positions: by the players selecting the long way of the table: by one particular player—whose play wasn't even particular. In fact, any idiosyncrasy, however foolish, appears to work like a charm—at times! Who has not heard players affirm that they lost every finesse they took? That every slight error they made was sure to lose them the rubber, while their opponents' mistakes worked to the advantage of the—opponents?

Why is it that every Club has certain players that have a standing reputation of being "bad holders," while other players are credited with always holding everything in the deck? When these questions can be answered intelligently then possibly we will be able to standardize "luck" along with the rules and conventions.

Luck at Auction Bridge is not merely the holding of good cards. If there is a dub in the game—as there always seems to be—the great luck is to cut against him: to make successful finesses: to have the opponents revoke.

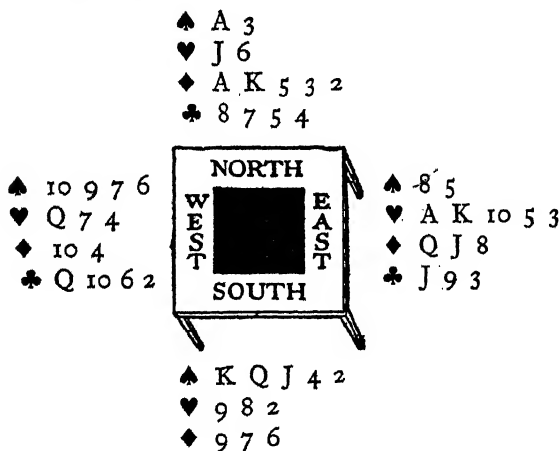
on a hand where you are down four tricks: to watch the enemy worry through a hand and make four-odd at Clubs, when they have game and rubber at No Trumps.

That bad luck will stick to a player during a session of play, or for a week, or even longer, is unquestionably true. But, I firmly believe, that in the long run it will average itself up, so that the capable player who will minimize his losses when the "breaks" are against him, must be a consistent winner at the end of a year.

A number of players, however, will never recognize the fact that the limitation of their ability to bid or play a hand correctly is a far greater hindrance to their success than is the bogey, bad luck.

Recently, I sat back of a man who bemoaned his luck in losing six consecutive rubbers and I watched him drop the seventh. His wail was that the West player had played "mighty well" in leading trumps and preventing a Heart ruff, but that was what he had been "up against all evening"!

This is the hand:



North had the deal and bid a Diamond, which East overcalled with a Heart, and South obtained the contract with a bid of one Spade.

West led the Queen of Hearts to his partner's call, and seeing but two Hearts in Dummy, he followed with the ten of Spades. Declarant won with the Ace and led another Heart, which East took and led the last trump, compelling South to lose three Heart tricks and one Diamond trick.

It is apparent that if the Declarant could have ruffed his third Heart in Dummy that he would have won the game, which would have meant the rubber, as each side had scored a game.

Irrespective of the opponents' good play, did South play the hand to its trick taking capacity?

That the opponents would not permit the Declarant to ruff a Heart should have been obvious to him as soon as West led the trump at the second trick, so he should have at once abandoned that scheme of play and tried for something else. His only chance was to establish his Diamonds before the enemy could make three Heart tricks. If he did not find the Diamond suit bunched in one hand the game could be won. As the Dummy was void of reëntries, the proper play was to have played a low Diamond and to have permitted the opponents to win the trick. If the Heart trick was not cashed in at once, the Declarant would have made five odd by discarding his two Hearts on the Diamonds, after the trumps were drawn. If the Heart trick was taken it was the last trick that the opponents could take and the game must have been won against any defense.

Poor, martyred "luck"!

Another hand that was chalked to Poor Old Tough Luck was the following:

	♠ Q 4		
	♥ 10 8 6		
	♦ 10 8 7 6 4		
	♣ J 9 5		
♠ A K 9 7 6		♠ J 8 5	
♥ 9		♥ 7 5 3 2	
♦ A K Q 5 3		♦ J 2	
♣ 4 3		♣ K 10 6 2	
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
	♠ 10 3 2		
	♥ A K Q J 4		
	♦ 9		
	♣ A Q 8 7		

South dealt and bid a Heart, West a Spade, South two Hearts, West three Diamonds. East went back to Spades and South secured the final contract at four Hearts doubled.

West opened the King of Diamonds and followed with the King and Ace of Spades. South held up the two of Spades until the second round of the suit, leaving West in doubt as to whether his partner could trump the third round. When it developed that East had three Spades, West led a low Diamond as his partner either held the Jack or could ruff the trick. South trumped the Diamond in his hand, ruffed a Spade in Dummy and came through with the Jack of Clubs, which was covered by the King. After drawing the trumps, old Tough Luck loomed up

in the offing and the ten refused to fall, setting the contract for one trick.

The "lucky" way to have played this hand would have been to trump the Diamond with the Jack of Hearts, follow with the Ace of Hearts, trump the Spade and then lead the Jack of Clubs. When the Jack is covered, the four of Hearts would permit Dummy to get in the lead to play the nine of Clubs and finesse against the ten. This line of play would have won the game. For South to count up the opponents' hands is quite easy. East's holding of two Diamonds and three Spades is shown by the play and when the nine of Hearts falls from West, he is pretty well marked as holding only two Clubs. The Declarant admitted that he had counted the hand in exactly this way, but that his luck was so bad that he could not afford to finesse and permit West to win with the singleton ten of Clubs—if he held it. The only comment I could make to this was, that the player take four cards and after shuffling them well, deal a card to one player and three cards to another player. According to the law of average the single card will be a specific one exactly once, every four times. In other words, it is bad play and not bad luck, to expect an even break on a three to one chance.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

PREËMPTIVE STRATEGY

THERE appears to be some question as to the present status of preëptive bids.

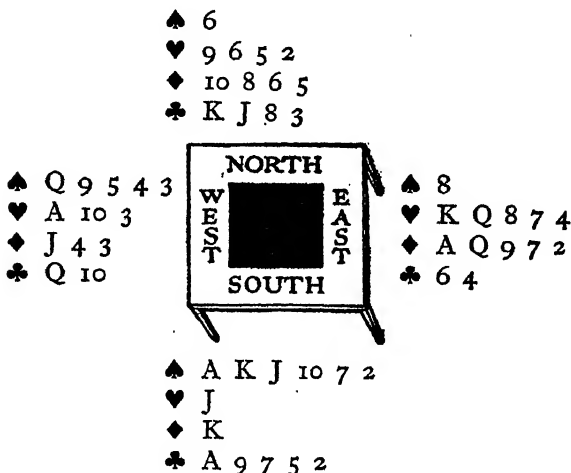
Apparently quite a number of players believe that this form of strategy is in ill-favor with the leading experts, because it tends to shut out valuable information, not only from the adversaries, but from the partner as well. As a matter of fact, proper preëptive bids are fully as effective now as they have been in the past, and when a hand goes astray, careful diagnosis will show that the fault lies entirely with the incorrect use of this style of bid. Players who believe that an original bid of "two" is a preëptive bid, are very much like the ancient Chinese warriors, who thought to frighten the enemy with banners upon which were painted horrible effigies. Against good players, a bid of less than three in the major suits or four in the minors, is absolutely of no avail, and unless the player has the cards or nerve to make such a bid, he had far better start with a bid of "one." Human nature is sufficiently perverse to put up a strong fight against being prevented from doing something that

might have been only a mild desire until it was aggravated.

A sound preëptive bid should call for at least two tricks more than the hand is worth. In most instances where such a bid obtains the contract and is defeated, the opponents generally have a chance to make the game if the contract goes to them, so a loss taken under such circumstances is entirely negligible. The difficulty, of late, is that many players have been so obsessed with the idea of making preëptive bids on every occasion, that penalties have been incurred on hands that might have gone game with the proper bidding. This, of course, is not so much the fault of the system as it is bad bidding and is no reason at all for advocating the abandonment of preëptive bids.

The fault usually lies with the player who does not recognize the potential strength of a "two suiter." When the length and strength is practically massed in one suit, that is the psychological time to preëempt, but when the hand contains a second suit of five cards or more, it is better to show both suits, when possible to do so. The latent possibilities of a hand, in which ten or eleven cards are in two suits, is almost inconceivable and a player who will preëempt with such a hand is literally selling the game for a mess of porridge.

The following hand was dealt at the Knickerbocker Whist Club of New York, at a duplicate tournament and rather disheartened a number of gallant preëptors:



South was the dealer and at a number of tables started the bidding with three or four Spades. Against the correct opening of either the Ace of Hearts or a low Diamond, the Declarant can take in only seven or eight tricks, dependent upon whether or not he takes the finesse against the Queen of Spades. Admittedly, the hand is a freak, and should be bid up to four, but only by easy stages. The proper bid is one Spade and when the Hearts are shown by East, the Spades are sufficiently powerful to be rebid, before the Clubs are shown at all. If two Spades are left in, the player is simply out of luck, but North must not be permitted to labor under the delusion that he is asked to choose between two suits that are equal, or almost so. However, East would be a poor player indeed, not to show the Diamonds and then South is given the opportunity to bid "four Clubs."

Once the Clubs are shown, the game is in sight, as South can make eleven tricks without difficulty, by taking two rounds of trumps as soon as he obtains the lead and then ruffing out the Spades. The main point of this hand is that, while every reasonable chance to make the game at Spades must be taken, the opportunist will not entirely overlook the possibilities of the secondary suit.

A hand quite similar to the one given above but where the second suit should not be shown, notwithstanding its great strength is the one following:

	♠ J 8 7	
	♥ J 8 7 4	
	♦ 8 2	
	♣ A K 7 6	
♠ 9 6 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST EAST </div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST EAST </div> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>	♠ 2
♥ —		♥ A 10 9 2
♦ A K Q J 7 4		♦ 10 9 6 5
♣ Q 8 4 2		♣ J 10 5 3
	♠ A K Q 10 5 3	
	♥ K Q 6 5 3	
	♦ 3	
	♣ 9	

A very important principle of bidding is embodied in this hand. "When a strong suit bid is freely supported by the partner, a second suit need not be shown." This hand is worthy of discussion because here the "preëmptors" seemed to steal a march on the one trick bidders.

Where the bidding started with one Spade by South, West overcalled with two Diamonds and North assisted

the Spades. East helped the Diamonds and if South then showed the Hearts, the hand was played at that make as North liked the Hearts better than the Spades. The mistake was for South to bid the Hearts at all, as his Spade holding was so powerful that, with his partner's immediate support, he did not desire a choice between the two suits.

While in this specific hand the game was safe at either make and the loss was mainly in the honor score, there are many hands where the opponents will double a high contract if only one suit is bid, but will refuse to take liberties against two suitors. With a hand as strong as this, a double of three or four Spades should not be particularly displeasing.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

LEADING TRUMPS TO THE MAKER

OCCASIONALLY the opening lead of a trump right up to the Declarant is a sound and winning play and at times the one defense that can save the game.

The conditions under which such a play is usually a winner is when the contract is fairly high and the dummy has supported the make after denying another suit bid of the Declarant.

I have noticed, however, that a number of players will start a trump as an opening lead upon very slight provocation. All they need to justify themselves in such a play is one or two low trumps and a single honor in two suits. That such a play is a cravenly one does not seem to occur to them. If the unhappy partner holds a possible trump trick, it is at once sacrificed to the trump-leading juggernaut.

Recently I was enabled to pick up four trumps to the Queen-Jack on my right, because an obliging opponent thought a singleton trump was the best opening lead he could make. The proper opening would have set me a trick, instead of which I landed the game.

After the dummy is exposed and the hand has developed to a certain point, there are, of course, many more

opportunities for leading trumps against the maker. Even here, however, it is useless to lead trumps, when the dummy hand has at least three cards of each plain suit and cannot ruff anything. The mere fact that the player is leading up to weakness is not a good excuse. The partner will eventually make the trump tricks that he is entitled to and it is playing the opponents' game to lead trumps without a good reason for doing so.

With Spades being trumps, the dummy holding three small ones and the Ace with two low Clubs, the opponent after deep thought, led a trump up to the dummy. The play was unfortunate and lost the game. In reply to his partner's remonstrance he said: "Well, I had to lead a trump or a Club, and I could not lead a Club up to the Ace." As a matter of fact, his Club holding consisted of small cards and was the only proper suit to lead. If the partner did not hold a finessing card, playing third hand, then the suit was solid with the opponents and they could not be prevented from bringing it in.

I held a hand some days ago, where a trump lead was made against me that lost the game. In this instance the lead was not entirely without justification, but nevertheless, I do not believe it was a sound play. When it is almost a certainty that the game can be saved by conservative methods, there is no excuse for taking unnecessary chances, even when there is some hope for defeating the contract.

		♠ Q 8 5	
		♥ K	
		♦ A J 8 7	
		♣ K 10 9 6 4	
♠ J 7 4			♠ A 3
♥ 7 6			♥ A 10 9 8 5
♦ 10 6 2			♦ K Q 9 4
♣ J 8 7 5 3			♣ A 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K 10 9 6 2	
		♥ Q J 4 3 2	
		♦ 5 3	
		♣ Q	

East had the deal and bid a Heart, which I passed second hand. West passed and North doubled. This was a weak double and hardly up to the requirements but we have all seen worse. East properly redoubled and I bid a Spade. With a sound doubling hand held by partner, game in Spades seems better than an even chance. East went on to two Hearts and I ventured two Spades. While many players would prefer to double the two Heart bid, which would assuredly have been sound play, the original redouble by East must not be forgotten. He probably holds a very powerful hand and should not be defeated for over a trick or two. However, the contract went for two Spades, and East won the first trick with the Ace of Hearts and at once played the Ace and low Spade. His reasoning, that South probably held five Hearts because the Spades were not bid over the Hearts until the double from Partner, was sound, but I cannot see how he hoped

to get his partner in to lead the last trump. If East had held three Spades, I believe the trump lead would have been obligatory.

However, when dummy won the third trick, a low Club was led, but East would not fall for that trap and hopped right up with the Ace, felling the singleton Queen. He now led the ten of Hearts—still hoping to take two tricks in Diamonds, if he refused to lead them. The heart was not covered, but ruffed in the dummy, and a Diamond discard taken on the King of Clubs. A Club was next led and trumped and the last trump drawn from West. Now, the Queen and Jack of Hearts was played and East was left with the high Heart and the King-Queen of Diamonds.

For the eleventh trick the last trump was led and East capitulated to the ever popular squeeze. Which merely proves that when the opponents are generous, 'tis folly to look a gift trick askance.

While on this subject of squeeze plays, the following hand is one of the neatest I have seen and I regret that the Declarant refused to play out the cards, but claimed only a Small Slam, which was graciously conceded to him. As he put it: "Six Spades, three Diamonds, two clubs and a Heart—twelve tricks."

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE OPPORTUNIST

A CONSIDERABLE number of bridge players believe that the method of handling a suit should be governed altogether by its distribution and high card strength. They cannot understand why, given exactly the same cards and distribution of a suit and with the identical opening, the play should at times be along diametrically different lines. The reason for this seeming paradox is, that very often the proper play is based entirely upon the holding of the remaining suits. Take the opening lead of a low Spade against a No Trump bid. The dummy holds the Ace-King and two small Spades, while the Declarant holds the Jack and two small cards of the suit. Usually the best play would be to play low from the dummy. If the Queen is with the leader, the Jack must win the first trick and if the Third Hand holds the Queen, the suit is still good for three tricks to the Declarant. If, however, the maker holds a dangerous suit, such as King-low, with no protection in dummy, and a suit that is close to establishment, the correct play is to at once jump up with the King on the opening lead. If the Queen happens to be with third hand it is obvious that a switch will be made, and there is little doubt as to what it will be.

In such a situation recently, the Declarant put up the honor Second Hand and by great luck the singleton Queen

fell from Third Hand, winning the game for the maker, while the hand would have been defeated for two tricks if Third Hand had won the first trick. I fear me that the facetious remark of the Declarant that he never permitted singleton Queens to win, was hardly appreciated by the opponents. The following hand is an excellent example of the fallacy of playing hands too much in a conventional way:

		♠ A 8 4	
		♥ Q 6	
		♦ A Q 10 8 4	
		♣ 10 8 3	
♠ 10 3 2			♠ Q J 6 5
♥ A 10 9 7 5 2			♥ J 8
♦ 6 3			♦ K 7 2
♣ Q 7			♣ 9 5 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST <div style="background-color: black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K 9 7	
		♥ K 4 3	
		♦ J 9 5	
		♣ A K J 6	

North had the deal and bid a Diamond, which South overcalled with a No Trump, securing the contract. The seven of Hearts was opened and the only chance to take two tricks in the suit seems to be the play of the Queen of Hearts. On the rule of eleven, East holds two cards higher than the seven and if one of them is the Ace, the lower card should nevertheless be finessed and must drive out the King. However, in this hand, making two tricks

in Hearts is the least of the troubles that confront the Declarer. The very important thing is to shut out the Heart suit, if possible.

The pivotal card is the King of Diamonds. If this card is with West then the game must be won against any defense. But, if East holds the King and has a Heart to return to partner, then the game is hopeless. It will be seen that the Diamonds can be finessed but one way, so the Declarant has no choice but to refuse to win the first Heart trick—either with the Queen or the King. The chances are greatly in favor of this line of play winning the game. If the opener holds a six-card suit, then East must be out on the third round. If the opener holds a four-card suit, then but three tricks can be made in Hearts and one in Diamonds—still a game for the declarer. If West holds exactly five cards in suit, then the game can be saved, but only by perfect play. West must permit the Queen to win the second trick! As a matter of actual play, the Jack won the first trick and West foolishly refused to take the second trick. Declarant put his hand in with a Spade and finessed the Diamond, which East won, and led a low Club but with the game in sight, the Declarant clattered up with the Ace and ran off the balance of the Diamonds.

At the end East is embarrassed in making two discards on the Diamonds and the Declarant scores eleven tricks, instead of seven that he would have made if the Queen had been played on the first trick. The student should take cognizance of the importance of playing the Jack under the Queen of Hearts if it had gone up on the first trick. If the Jack is retained, it cannot be overtaken by the partner and effectively blocks the entire suit.

In this hand, if the long suit had been with South, so that the finesse could have been taken to put West in the lead if the play was not successful, then unequivocally, the only proper play would have been to endeavor to win the first trick with the Queen of Hearts.

It is really curious how often plays that appear to be pure, unadulterated luck, are based upon reasoning that to a great extent, eliminates the factor of luck. On two occasions one evening I was playing a hand at one No Trump and against a low Spade opening, holding the Queen and two small cards in the dummy and two little cards in my hand, I played the Queen on the first occasion—and held the trick, and played low on the second occurrence and the Ace was played third-hand. As my holding was practically identical in both cases, a bystander inquired if there was any explanation other than “blind luck,” for my choice of plays. I thought there was! In the first instance, I had made an original bid and there had been no further bidding. My right-hand opponent was a very capable player and I knew that if he held either the Ace or King he would, under no circumstances, play either to the first trick unless the Queen went up.

It was not at all unlikely that the leader was playing from the Ace-King, and as that was the only hope, I had nothing to lose by jumping up with the Queen. In the second case, I was Fourth Hand. The Dealer passing, my partner had bid a minor suit and I secured the contract for a No Trump. Having passed as Dealer, I felt practically certain that the leader did not hold both Ace and King of his suit. Again, Third Hand this time was not a ranking, close-counting player. My only chance was to give him an opportunity to make an error and, as some-

times happens, he was obliging. He did not dare to take the obligatory Ace-ten finesse. I can merely say in conclusion, that if the Queen had gone up Second Hand, the only chance of the hand would have been lost—that of permitting the adversary to make a mistake.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

BIDS TO THE SCORE

ONE of the commonest errors of many unusually good players is that of attempting to "bid to the score." In the days of old Bridge, before the bidding appendage was part of the game, it was a vital necessity to know the state of the score and to select the make in accordance with that knowledge. In the old game, but one declaration could be made and while that declaration might be doubled and redoubled, ad infinitum, it could not be changed into another make. Quite a number of old-time players are still imbued with the spirit of bidding to the score. Holding a good No Trump bid, they start the bidding with two or three Clubs, because such a bid, if successful, will give them the game. Very often they find an unfortunate distribution of their suit, that prevents them from making the game, when a correct opening bid would have elicited a game going declaration from their partner. Should the bid fit in with their partner's hand, then the opponents are very likely to be heard from, so after all is said and done, unless a real, shut-out preëmptive bid can be made, a proper, conventional informatory call is usually the best one to make at any stage of the game.

At a score of 18 to 0, I saw a player bid two Clubs on a holding of six to the Queen-Jack, with a worthless hand outside. After the partner had raised him to four, the con-

tract was doubled and set for four hundred points. Having five Clubs to the Ace-King, the partner was justified in believing that the original bidder must have compensating values to make up for the lack of top cards in the bid suit. If a player desires to play an understanding partnership game, bidding to the score should be relegated to the distant days of—"May I play," and "If you please."

There is one position, however, when the state of the score must be considered as a potent factor in the bidding. If the score is advanced to a point where a bid of "one" will give the game to the player and he is able to make one or two by-tricks, then it is execrable play that permits him to obtain the contract so cheaply. I must not be misunderstood as saying that the player should never be permitted to obtain the contract for a bid of "one" at an advanced score. Often a bid of one trick should not be overcalled, but when this happens, the Declarant should have little difficulty in making four or five odd tricks. But, when the Declarant can just make his contract, or at most, a trick over and he is allowed to obtain the contract and make the game, then it is apparent that the opponents have not properly bid their hands. With material sufficiently strong to hold the contract down to seven or eight tricks, the opposition must be strong enough to bid, even if they are doubled and set for a trick or two. To permit the enemy to "sweat-out," by making a bid of "one," is the worst atrocity in the category of Auction crimes.

It is a well known fact that an advanced score helps towards making the game only once in about 34 times, when playing against proper defense. So, when you have 27 on the rubber game, the actual advantage towards winning the rubber is very slight—about three percent.

When the rubber is finally won, it will be noticed that the 27 points might just as well have been "above the line." The advantage of the score, however, is of considerable material benefit that does not always appear on the surface. As I have pointed out, the enemy should not allow the player with the advanced score to obtain the contract too cheaply. A clever player, having this point of view in mind, will find it more lucrative to gather in some easy penalties, than allow himself to be forced to overbid his hand. To sum up, the advanced score may not be a great help towards the game, but it is fine for gathering in the penalties.

It is always a matter of considerable interest to go over a hand that a number of more or less expert players find it difficult to make game on. At the Knickerbocker Whist Club only two players out of fifteen, at duplicate auction, secured the game on the following hand:

		♠ 7 6 3 2	
		♥ K 9 8	
		♦ 10 9 6	
		♣ A Q 4	
♠ —			♠ K Q J
♥ 10 4 3			♥ Q 6 5
♦ Q 5 4 3			♦ A K J 8 7
♣ J 9 8 6 5 3			♣ K 10
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 10 9 8 5 4	
		♥ A J 7 2	
		♦ 2	
		♣ 7 2	

South had the deal and bid a Spade, which was passed by West and North. East bid a No Trump, South passed and West rescued with two Clubs. North now helped the Spades, East called three Diamonds and South went to three Spades. West supported the Diamonds to four and North bid four Spades. East's double was passed all around, although it is a close question whether West should not have bid five Diamonds, as his support is based entirely on ability to ruff—if Diamonds are the trumps.

Played at Spades, the hand presents some very neat situations. The common error seemed to be that North located the King of Clubs with the West hand, on account of the Club bid and subsequent denial by East.

Even if this were so, why take a finesse that is unnecessary? The No Trump bid marks the Queen of Hearts with East and that finesse must be taken, but the Club play is not essential.

The Diamond is opened and continued, South ruffing the second round. Now, if the trumps are divided, it seems like smooth sailing, but when West does not follow, the Declarant sees he must lose two trump tricks, so he cannot afford to permit any more suit tricks to escape him.

A low Heart should be led and won with the King. On the return the Jack must be finessed and the Ace drops the balance, permitting dummy to take a discard on the thirteener. This discard must be the Diamond and not the Club! If a Club is discarded, East should ruff and play the last trump before forcing South in the lead by ruffing him with a Diamond and compelling him to lose a Club trick. With the Diamond discard, East is helpless! A Club lead is to the tenace and a Diamond affords the enemy both a ruff and a discard of the losing Club.

If East refuses to ruff the Heart, the Declarant will stick him in the lead with a trump and the same situation presents itself as two rounds of trumps will leave dummy with a trump still remaining to ruff the Diamond.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

AUCTION BRIDGE IN DUPLICATE

AT the Knickerbocker Whist Club of New York, where "Auction Bridge in Duplicate" is a feature, more than thirty tables of players participate every Thursday evening. There is an erroneous impression prevalent that a player with a good memory for cards has a decided advantage at this style of game, because a number of the hands might be remembered on the replay of the cards. This is not so at all. The hands are never replayed by the same players, but are passed to the other tables, where the "duplicate" play takes place.

It is apparent that all the players seated North and South, at the conclusion of the match, will have played the same hands, while the East and West players will have played the identical cards as the players who are seated their way of the table. In each game there are really two matches—one for the North and South players and one for the East and Westers.

Players unfamiliar with duplicate will at once object, that some players are unquestionably much poorer than others and diplomacy of the highest rank would be required to match 'em up. That playing all evening against a poor pair would be as good as holding most of the best cards. All this is entirely overcome by having the players move to another table after two or more hands are played. The East and West players travel to a higher numbered table, while boards containing the cards, are moved to a

lower numbered table. The North and South players do not move. This method of progression will permit each pair to play all the hands and against every pair, without meeting the same cards or the same players, when there is an odd number of tables.

Should there be an even number of tables then the East and West players must skip one table when the match is half played. With twelve tables in play (an even number), all the East and Westers would skip after playing their sixth table. To complete the round, with even tables, it is necessary to play twice against the pair where the start was made. Even this inequality may be overcome by a "relay system" that is now played at all the larger Clubs.

It will be seen that, at duplicate, all the competing players hold exactly the same cards and play against the same players, so a "top score," made under these conditions, really means something. Should indifferent cards run one way of the table, as may well happen, the best score made can easily be a considerable minus. However, the average score is taken by dividing the aggregate score of all the tables by the number of tables in play, and the amount that each score is over or under the average, is the amount that that pair win or lose. Rubbers are not played. Each deal is complete in itself and 125 points is scored for the game.

Although the cards are dealt at the commencement of the game, it is remarkable how many hands appear every session of play that seem as extraordinary as if they had been purposely arranged by an expert, to trap an innocent player.

The following hand was played at sixteen tables, and only at one table was five odd at Clubs made!

King, Jack and ten missing, that the suit would surely have been bid, if five of them had been in one hand. This leaves the West hand with one Club, which persumably is *not* the King. The very important point, however, is that if the singleton Club is not the King, the game cannot be won! If the Club King is with the East the next Heart will be overtrumped and the two Spades lost.

The one chance to win the game is that the singleton Club is the King—and so it turned out to be.

During the play of the Canadian championship at Toronto, a hand was played on the final day of the tournament, that embodied nearly all essential points necessary for perfect bidding and skilful play.

	♠ K 8 7 4 2	
	♥ J 6	
	♦ A Q J 10 9	
	♣ 4	
♠ A 9 6 3		♠ Q J
♥ 10 8 5 4 2		♥ A 7 3
♦ 7		♦ K 6 4 3
♣ Q J 9		♣ 8 6 5 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	
	♠ 10 5	
	♥ K Q 9	
	♦ 8 5 2	
	♣ A K 10 7 3	

South had the deal and bid a Club, which West passed and North bid a Spade. East passed and South then called a No Trump, which North overcalled with two

Diamonds. South went two No Trumps and secured the contract.

The Heart was opened and the second round was won by the Declarant. The Diamond finesse went to East and the Hearts were cleared. It now appears that only eight tricks can be made, four Diamonds and two each in Clubs and Hearts, but careful play will take nine tricks against any defense. When the Diamonds are run off, five cards are left in each hand. The Declarant must hold three Clubs and two Spades. The West hand is "squeezed" and must discard one of his good Hearts, retaining three Clubs, one Heart and the Ace of Spades. He is now put in with the Spade and makes his one Heart—and resigns. At only two tables was this hand correctly played as above.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE VERY WORST

MUCH has been said and written in reference to the importance of personal equation as a governing factor, both in playing and bidding. We all know certain players that it is perfectly safe to "push up" a trick or two, because they apparently would rather secure the play of the hand and be defeated, than take a penalty from their opponents. Then we have the other extreme, where players will cheerfully give up a game hand, to inflict a chastening double on the enemy, that will at most, gain them one or two hundred points. They look at it as a personal affront when the opponents insist upon bidding against them, even though the opposing bid is a thoroughly sound one and has a fair chance for success. After all, the object of the game is to obtain the greatest number of points and the players have the right to go after this objective in any legitimate way that, in their judgment, appears to be the best.

Some time ago I received a query from a lady in Cleveland, asking what, in my opinion, was the very worst fault that a bridge player could have. It would have been easy to tell the worst fault—all of them—but the "very" puts a different aspect to the question.

I wonder if the correct answer is—a husband!

To side-step a query as earnest as this one would be unfair, so, scalpel in hand, the inquisition is in order.

Were it put to the popular, or rather unpopular, vote, I am quite sure that the consensus of opinion would be divided, between awarding the palm to the flagrant over-bidder or the habitual under-bidder. While both of these offenders are generally bad partners to sit opposite to, it must be conceded that there are times when their style of play proves a consistent point-winner. This is shown in the duplicate matches, when for an entire evening the cards will favor the bold bidders and the winning scores go to this class. At other sessions, the timid bidders have their inning and come out ahead. In the great majority of times, however, the best scores go to the soundest players, proving beyond question the truth of the old axiom, that, "exceptional play wins only in exceptional cases."

When a player overbids his hand and is set for four or five hundred points, it is hard to convince the abused partner that "it is all for the best." Nevertheless, there are occasions when the loose-bidder is almost, if not quite, justified. On the rubber game, when the opponents are sure to score the rubber, with a possible slam, much might be said in extenuation of the flag-flyer.

Something too, can be said in favor of the over-careful bidder. Ever refusing to take a penalty, the rubbers he loses are small ones, and count up slowly. When the cards are running badly for him, he will save many hundreds of points that any other player would have been saddled with.

However, to get back to the "very worst," I think that the greatest point of difference between winning and losing at Auction is where a player continually takes losses, when the opponents could be defeated if permitted to play the hand. The luck of the cards cannot be sufficiently great to carry to success a player who insists on overbid-

normal length in the Spade suit, he is justified in believing that he can make at least two tricks in the suit against the opposing declaration. He should count on making two Diamond tricks and his best play is to double four Hearts. If his partner holds four or more Spades and no side tricks, it is up to him to decide whether to leave the double stand, or to go on with the Spades. Being void of the Heart suit is no advantage to South, especially as he holds only five Spades and an immediate Heart ruff will ruin his hand, should one of the opponents hold four Spades. East overbids his hand because the great length of his Heart suit leads him to believe that the game is in danger, as the first round of his suit is likely to be trumped.

In the play of the hand West led three rounds of Clubs and ruffed his partner on the fourth round. South was now compelled to lose a Diamond trick and was fortunate to find that suit evenly divided, or he would have lost another trick.

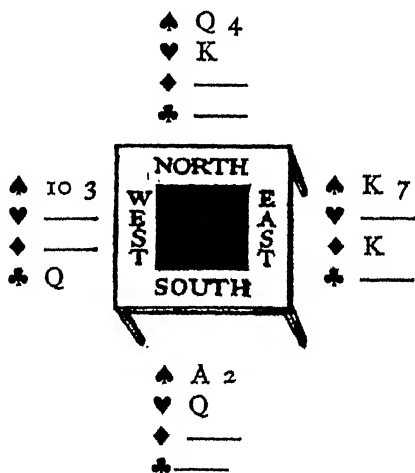
At four Hearts doubled, South should have played three rounds of Spades, North discarding the three of Diamonds on the third round. On the King and Ace of Diamonds, North should echo with the seven and five. South would then ruff him with a third Diamond and a Club lead would leave East with nothing left but Hearts, so he would be compelled to ruff and permit North to make his Queen of Hearts, being set for a loss of four hundred points.

A difference of six hundred points on one hand would go a long ways towards equalizing the "luck."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

UNDERLEADING

IN the first volume of Lenz on Bridge I gave a rather neat ending position, where, with three cards left in the hand, the player could take two of the tricks, if he played correctly. With so few cards remaining, it seemed to me that all the combinations could be gone over quickly, so I suggested that solvers go at it more in the way of a time test, than of perspicacity. The position was:



South had the lead and playing Spades as Trumps, did not appear to have a difficult task, so I hardly thought it

worthy of giving the proper play and defense. The following extract from a letter I received, leads me to believe that some players treated my little problem with rather too much disdain.

... "Your problem was not at all difficult and I did it in exactly eleven seconds. I led the Queen of Hearts and Mr. West threw away the Queen of Clubs. Mr. East trumped with the seven of trumps and played the King of Diamonds. It makes no difference whether his partner trumps with the three or ten of Spades, the two tricks must be won by the other players. I wonder if anyone did it in quicker time than I did?"

J.A.S.

No, Dear J. A. S., you certainly deserve the time prize. But, after all, it was more of a bridge problem than a hundred yard dash that was under discussion.

Permit me to be Mr. West for the nonce, and I might feel the urge to tag the Queen of Hearts with the three of trumps. East would discard the Diamond and nothing but sudden death would prevent us from taking another trick.

The only play that will win two tricks for North and South is the lead of the two of Spades by South and the cover of any card West plays, by North. When East wins and leads his Diamond, South discards the Heart and North has a trump left to beat anything West has remaining. The Ace of trumps wins the last trick.

One of the most troublesome plays at Auction for some players is the opening lead against a No Trump, when the suit to be opened is headed by two or three honors.

Many players will open with an honor when they have cards of reëntry and lead fourth-best when the hand is void of reëntry cards. While there are some hands where

make nine tricks and the game, by setting up the Clubs before West's Spade reëntry is established. If West leads the eight, his fourth best Diamond, South wins with the nine and starts the Clubs. East wins with the King and returns the Diamond, permitting West to run off five tricks in the suit.

Playing in a match game and not holding a reëntry, I led low from a seven-card suit headed by the Ace-King. Dummy went down with the Queen-ten-seven. The Declarant finessed the ten—I would have hated the guess in his position—and my partner held the Jack and one low card. The result was that we took in seven tricks, when two tricks would have been our meed with a high lead.

A good rule to follow, when in doubt on original openings, is to take every chance in underleading when playing against a No Trump declaration and adopt the contrary course against a suit make.

It is usually bad play to make an original opening from a suit headed by an Ace or King, when playing against a trump make, although it shows a want of intelligence to argue that it should never be done. Often the hand does not contain a desirable opening lead, and the player must choose between a number of leads, all of which are opened at a disadvantage. It can well be that the lead of a low card from four to the King is easily the best lead that some particular hand affords. The player should bear in mind, however, that it is only on original openings that strict conventions as to the leads, should be followed. After the play has progressed to a certain point, it is very often good strategy to play in direct variance to the generally accepted standards. With the Dummy exposed, the Declarant apparently reluctant to start the suit that appears the obvious one, the Partner's cards an unknown

quantity because he has not bid or obtained the lead, then the leader may be quite justified in making an unorthodox lead.

To underlead an Ace, with the King exposed in the dummy, may be the one chance to save the game. I have even lead a low card from the King-low, through the Dummy's holding of the Ace-Queen-low and saved the game, because the Declarant hopped up with the Ace. There is little doubt, but that the Declarant fully intended to take the finesse later on in the hand, but when the play was thrown at him in this way, he had sudden qualms and decided upon a finesse in another suit that unfortunately—for him—proved unsuccessful.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THROWING THE LEAD

PLAYING for position is almost as important at Bridge as at Chess or Checkers. At the latter games, having "the move" is often the difference between winning or losing. At Bridge, even the player with mediocre ability, knows that many close games can be won by forcing the enemy to take the lead at an end position and play away from a guarded honor.

It is infinitely more difficult when a play of this character must be made early in the hand. Having a choice of ten or eleven cards to lead from, it seems that a player might find at least one that would permit of a dignified exit, but at times it just cannot be done. Even when there is a way of escape, it may be so obscured that the player does not see it and so a game is won by giving the opponents an opportunity to make a mistake. When a Declarant is in a position, where he must play at a disadvantage, irrespective of what suit he broaches, then he assuredly cannot lose by saddling the lead on an opponent and permitting him to do the guessing. Even an expert may go wrong.

On the following hand, the lead was thrown to await developments, but the unfortunate West player was so deeply morassed that he could not extricate himself:

	♠ J 4		
	♥ 4 3		
	♦ 9 8 5		
	♣ A J 9 8 5 4		
♠ A Q 10 8 7 3 2			♠ 9 5
♥ 8 2			♥ J 9 6
♦ K 10 3			♦ 7 6 4 2
♣ K			♣ Q 7 6 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 150px;"> NORTH WEST EAST <div style="background-color: black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div>		
	♠ K 6		
	♥ A K Q 10 7 5		
	♦ A Q J		
	♣ 10 2		

West was the dealer and started off with a bid of three Spades. This was a proper preëmptive bid and while the contract would have been defeated, the loss would have been justifiable. Unless the partner can produce a trick or two, the game will doubtless be lost. With fair support from the partner, game at Spades is possible. North and East passed the Spade bid, but South went to four Hearts and that bid secured the contract. West was hard put for a good opening lead, but finally elected to lead the eight of Hearts right up to the Declarant. While this was the best lead as the cards lay, many good players object to putting the partner "under the hammer." After winning the first trick, South took three rounds of trumps and led a low Club. The low club was a better lead than the ten, because if West holds a guarded honor in the suit and not more than three cards, the game can be won by taking the double finesse. The play of the eight the first time

would force out one honor and South would lead the ten on the next round, overtaking with the Jack in dummy. All this would be useless if West held two or three cards and covered an honor led. However, when West played the lone King on the two, it looked like a forlorn hope. The only remaining chance was to permit West to hold the trick. Much to West's disgust he was again in the lead and this time he led a low Diamond, doubtless the best lead he had. South won with the Jack and now can count West's holding without difficulty. To justify his original Spade bid of three without the King or the Jack, he must have held seven cards in the suit, which leaves him with but two Diamonds remaining. The Ace and a low Diamond plows him back in the lead and now he is compelled to play the Spades and free the King for the game-going trick. It is hardly necessary to point out that if the Declarant had won the first Club trick with the Ace, that his contract would have been defeated for one trick, because, when the Diamond finesse lost to the King, West would have at once returned the Diamond and eventually have made two tricks in Spades, while East must take one trick in Clubs. That a sharp player might have jumped up Second Hand with a holding of King and a low Club is not impossible. In such event the logical and best continuation, after the King is allowed to hold, would be the low Club. Dummy would win with the Ace and as West could then hold but two Diamonds, the Ace and a low Diamond would still put him in the lead with nothing left in his hand but Spades. The King of Diamonds is always marked in the West hand, both from the bidding and his continued refusal to lead the suit.

Another hand where a player could have gotten out of a trying situation by throwing the lead is the following:

		♠ 9 4	
		♥ Q 5	
		♦ 10 8 7 3	
		♣ K J 5 3 2	
♠ A 8 7			♠ 3
♥ A K J 7 6 4			♥ 9 2
♦ A 4 2			♦ K Q J 9 6 5
♣ 8			♣ Q 10 9 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K Q J 10 6 5 2	
		♥ 10 8 3	
		♦ —	
		♣ A 6 4	

West strained a point by preempting this hand with a bid of four Hearts, but South, nothing daunted, went to four Spades, which was doubled by West. The King of Hearts was opened and followed with the Ace. Now West tries to make the Ace of Diamonds but the Declarant trumps it, ruffs the third Heart with the nine of Spades and leads the last trump in the dummy. West wins with the Ace and leads another Heart which South ruffs and leads out all the trumps. With three cards remaining unplayed, South holds three Clubs, North two Clubs and the ten of Diamonds and East has three Clubs, the King of Diamonds and—a discard to make on the last trump! The squeeze is unescapable and the Declarant must make his doubled contract.

While the hand is neatly played by South, he would

have been defeated two tricks, if he had had to contend against perfect defensive play. When West wins the first trick, the play of the Ace followed by another trump would have been fatal to the Declarant. Such play, however, would have been unsound as the Club suit, as far as West knows, may be solid against him, and afford South one or two valuable discards, after the trumps are drawn. The proper play at the second trick, would have been the *low trump*. This play would have obtained the same result, but without the attending danger. West holds command of the trump suit and must secure the lead before the Declarant can do any damage. If the Heart ruff is played for, West wins the trick and takes dummy's last trump without relinquishing the lead. Should South clear the trumps, East will discard a Heart, so that his partner can count the suit on the second round.

Throwing the lead with a low trump, is the outstanding defense of this hand.

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE QUITTER

IF there is a more exasperating player at the Bridge table than the one who is ready to acknowledge defeat the instant he picks up a poor hand, I have yet to meet him. That the partner may hold a fighting hand is immaterial—half of the team is licked before a bid is made or a card is played. When the spineless player happens to be in the lead towards the end of the hand, he will fume and fret before he gives out the gladsome tidings: "It doesn't make any difference what I play, the game is lost." It seems to me that it would be far better to lay down the hand and concede the balance of the tricks. Very often the occasion arises where the game is hopelessly lost unless some bizarre and unconventional play is essayed. When such a position comes up, my advice is to "take a chance," or throw up the hand.

	♠ 9 6 5 3 2	
	♥ 9	
	♦ A K Q J	
	♣ 10 7 4	
♠ K J	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ A Q 10
♥ K 4 3		♥ 7 5
♦ 9 6		♦ 8 7 5 3 2
♣ K Q 8 6 5 3		♣ A 9 2
	♠ 8 7 4	
	♥ A Q J 10 8 6 2	
	♦ 10 4	
	♣ J	

On this hand North bid a Diamond and South went the limit with four Hearts. The Clubs were opened and the second round was ruffed by the Declarant. Dummy was put in with a Diamond and the Heart finesse was lost to the King. West now led another Club, with the remark: "It makes no difference—." Either a Spade or Diamond lead would have set the contract two tricks instead of losing the game and rubber. It should be apparent to West that the Declarant must have six Hearts and four Diamond tricks and the game cannot be saved unless East holds the Ace of Spades. East's reply to his partner's indignant: "You surely didn't expect me to lead away from the King-Jack of Spades," was quite to the point: "Either that, or throw up the hand."

A hand where the small cards were of vital importance was the following:

	♠ K J 4	
	♥ J 9 6	
	♦ A K Q 8	
	♣ J 9 4	
♠ 8 6 5 2	<div><div>NORTH</div><div>WEST<div></div>EAST</div><div>SOUTH</div></div>	♠ Q 10 7 3
♥ K Q 7 4 3		♥ 8
♦ J 6		♦ 10 7 5 4 3 2
♣ A Q		♣ 7 5
	♠ A 9	
	♥ A 10 5 2	
	♦ 9	
	♣ K 10 8 6 3 2	

North had the deal and bid a Diamond. South secured the contract for one No Trump and West opened the four of Hearts. The very first play made by the Declarant decided the result of the game. On the rule of eleven, East can hold but one card that will beat the four. Should it be an honor, the game should be easy. If not an honor, then the game can only be won by playing the nine or Jack from dummy. Nothing can be lost by such play, no matter how the balance of the suit happens to lie with the opponents. Playing on the presumption that "it makes no difference," the Declarant played the six and the eight forced the ten. When West got in with the Queen of Clubs the King of Hearts was led and permitted to hold. The Queen then drove out the Ace and West again secured the lead with the Ace of Clubs and made the rest of the Hearts, taking in five tricks. If a high Heart is played from dummy on the first trick the Declarant

must stop the suit three times and cannot be prevented from making ten tricks.

While it seems that capital punishment might be a bit drastic for misplaying the above hand, I am sure no condemnation would be too severe for the player who was penalized, instead of making the game on this deal:

		♠ 9 7 5 3	
		♥ 6 3	
		♦ J 10 9 7 4	
		♣ K Q	
♠ J 8 2			♠ 10 6 4
♥ J 9			♥ K 10 7 5
♦ Q 6 3			♦ 8 5
♣ J 10 9 7 3			♣ 8 5 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A K Q	
		♥ A Q 8 4 2	
		♦ A K 2	
		♣ A 6	

South dealt very capably and started the ball rolling with two No Trumps. West was not interested, but North, a player of the old school, put in an atrocity in the way of three Diamonds. South went to three No Trumps and North subsided, though somewhat reluctantly.

The opening lead of the Jack of Clubs was won by the Queen and the Jack of Diamonds was led from dummy. If the Queen is with East, the Declarant will make nine tricks and game, whether East covers or not. For obvious reasons, East did not cover and West won the trick—clearing the Clubs on the next lead. Of course, the Declar-

ant now has the Diamond suit blocked by his Ace-King and wiggle and squirm as he will, eight tricks are the maximum number that he can gather in. If the Declarant, who really was a better player than might be inferred from his play of this hand, had been a bit less somnolent, he could have made twelve tricks for a Small Slam, against any line of defensive play by the opponents. The first trick should have been overtaken by the Ace of Clubs, so as to keep a sure card of reëntry in the dummy. While the South hand has reëntries galore, the North hand has but a single one, and this precious ewe lamb should be fervently guarded. After winning the first Club trick, the Declarant should have cashed in the three Spades, leaving the thirteener good in dummy. Now the Ace-King and low Diamond puts West in with the Queen and the Club continuation leaves nothing for the Declarant to do, but take the Heart finesse on the twelfth trick. Most likely it would not have been necessary to take that finesse, as West would have probably switched the lead to a Heart on the presumption that if the partner did not have a trick in that suit the slam could not be saved.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSIVE BIDS

WHILE the ramifications of Auction Bridge are varied and numerous, there are after all but three main lines that must be thoroughly mastered, if the player wishes to avoid the pitfalls that are always ready to catch the unwary.

The Original Bid, the Forced Bid and the Secondary Bid, have three distinct meanings and the thinking player who refuses to arbitrarily adopt a convention, unless he knows the reason why, can unhesitatingly accept the conclusions of the experts on these bids, because they are unquestionably natural and logical.

Briefly, an Original Bid is one made by the dealer, or by another player after the previous players have passed. The minimum showing of such a bid is two quick tricks and at least four cards in suit.

A Forced Bid is made after a previous player has bid and may or may not have any number of quick tricks.

A Secondary Bid is the bid made by a player who has already passed and disclaims two tricks, unless he has passed Third Hand.

It is with the second, that of the forced or over-call bid, that I take exception to the writings of the "best authorities." Most of the text-books state that a forced bid, must have one and a half quick tricks, with either a trick or half a trick in the suit bid. This seems little

enough indeed, but notwithstanding my fear of the wrath to come, I am in favor of lowering the standard to half a trick—or less.

A hard and fast mechanical rule that shows certain values is a fine thing and in the great majority of cases will prove a sure winner. In times of stress, however, the individual judgment of the player should be permitted full sway and the endeavor to hamper him with restricting rules will only tend to work harm.

I played lately with a well known writer whose books are widely read. After the opponent had bid, my partner made a forced bid that reeked to the skies. The quick trick value of his hand was of such an infinitesimal fraction, that it had best be ignored. The bid, however, proved a winner, as we saved the game at a slight penalty. I mentioned something insinuatingly about the one and a half quick tricks necessary for a forced bid, but his deprecatory reply was as expected: "exceptional case—most exceptional."

The one great danger the forced bidder assumes is that the partner will mark him with certain values and double the opponents. If the partner has at least given one assist before doubling, then the player without a quick trick can go on with his bid; but, when the partner does not assist, then there is nothing to do but suffer in silence. And the book-writers are to blame for this state of affairs—the insidious one and a half quick-trickers. I believe, after a forced bid, the partner should never double unless he can defeat the make with his cards alone. Otherwise, he should give his partner all the assists that his hand is worth and permit the partner to do the doubling—if he can. Some time ago I bid two Clubs over a one Heart bid. Third Hand jumped to three Hearts

and my partner doubled. Had I known that my partner held five Clubs to the Ace—as well as five Hearts to the Queen—I would have rebid the Clubs and made the game. The enemy made their contract and my partner eyed me deep disdain as she reproached me with: “partner, if you had had one and a half quick tricks—.” I could only bow my head in shame.

I wonder what the advocates of the one and a half quick tricks would do, if they held the South cards on the following deal:

	♠ 7 6 4	
	♥ 10 9 7 6 4	
	♦ A Q 2	
	♣ 5 3	
♠ K 9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>WEST EAST</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>	♠ A
♥ A Q 8 2		♥ K J 5 3
♦ K 5		♦ 9 8 3
♣ K Q J 10 7		♣ A 8 6 4 2
	♠ Q J 10 8 5 3 2	
	♥ —	
	♦ J 10 7 6 4	
	♣ 9	

This hand was played in a duplicate game. West had the deal and bid a Club and I, sitting South, eventually landed the contract at four Spades doubled. The Clubs were opened and the second round ruffed. The Queen of Spades was led and West clattered up with the King, thereby catching the partner's Ace, together with sundry other things that I cannot dwell upon here. However, the

play meant nothing, ten tricks must be made against perfect defense and the unlucky "guess" of West cost merely an extra trick.

At another table, South bid up to five Spades and was doubled, but again West refused to be "underled" and hopped up with King, only to meet with disaster. Of course, the East and West players can make five odd at either Clubs or No Trumps, but that result is problematical, while the penalty seems assured. It is a close question whether East's great length in Clubs does not make it seem that a return to Clubs would prove more lucrative than the four Spade double, but if the bid gets to five Spades, the double can hardly be rescued.

To get back to our *motif* of quick tricks on forced bids, does it seem plausible that any ranking bridge-player would refrain from bidding the South cards because of the lack of quick tricks? If it is generally conceded that South should bid, then why is it broadcasted far and wide that a forced bid must have one and a half quick tricks? I am quite willing to admit that, for the ordinary normal hand, this quick-trick requirement is sound. But, owing to the vast number of recurring exceptions, an arbitrary rule is too misleading.

Another moot point that bothers many players, is the dividing line between a Major suit and a No Trump bid. When the player has the choice between these two bids, it is conceded that the Major suit is the safer bid. But, again, a number of the writers qualify their choice by stating that unless the suit contains at least two honors, it is better to bid the No Trump.

In my opinion, the number of honors held are of far less importance than the distribution, or the general make-up of the hand. When the hand contains a singleton,

or has two suits stopped but once, or one suit without any stopper, then the suit bid should be given the preference, even if it contains but one high honor.

The following hand was played at twelve tables of duplicate at the Raymond Club. At three tables only was the game made and the puzzle is to find out how many South players, as dealer, bid Spades and how many No Trumps:

		♠ J 10 3	
		♥ Q J 7 2	
		♦ 10 8	
		♣ A 9 6 2	
♠ K 4			♠ Q 8 5
♥ 9 8 5			♥ A 10 6 3
♣ J 8 4			♦ 9 5 3
♦ K Q J 7 4			♣ Q 10 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 9 7 6 2	
		♥ K 4	
		♦ A 6 2	
		♣ K 5 3	

At No Trump, against the best defense, it was quite an achievement to make the odd trick. At Spades, the third Diamond was ruffed, the double finesse taken in Spades and the losing Club discarded on the Heart. The only play of importance required to land the game at Spades, was contingent upon the West player switching to a Club lead. In that event the trick was won by the King and a Heart set up in Dummy before the Ace of Clubs reentry was taken out of the hand.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

FAVORING CHANCES

WHEN the declarer holds six cards of a suit headed by the Queen, Jack, ten, and the dummy holds four cards of that suit, including the Ace, should a finesse be taken against the King, or is it better to lead the Queen and if Second Hand does not cover, to play the Ace and trust that the King will fall?

This question has been a source of considerable worry to a player, who agreed to leave the matter to me for a decision—provided I ruled in his favor. At any rate, he writes me that I am all wrong in saying that the finesse is the correct play. His contention is that with ten cards in the combined hands and one played by the opponent, there are but two cards of the suit missing and the chances are at least equal that Fourth Hand holds the King without a guard, in which case it will fall under the Ace. In the specific hand under discussion, that was the actual distribution and the play of the Ace would have won the game—hence the argument.

When a situation of this kind presents itself, there is often something in the bidding or play that will act as a guide to the best procedure. When this is not the case, as in the instance cited, then the law of average must be adhered to. With three cards outstanding, the chances are greatly in favor of two being in one hand and one in

the other. Of course, the hand holding two cards has double the chance to hold any certain card. If Fourth Hand holds the two cards, then the finesse will not incur a loss, as the King must make. If Second Hand holds the two cards, the percentage favors the finesse. Should the three cards be in the Second Hand, then the finesse is a winner. The only chance to gain by playing the Ace is, if but one card is in the Fourth Hand and that card is the King. To sum up, the chances in favor of the finesse are, mathematically, 207 to 112.

Taking advantage of the law of chances and paying close attention to the bidding was largely responsible for landing the game in the following hand:

♠ 9
 ♥ K Q 10 6 3
 ♦ A K J 5
 ♣ Q 8 5

♠ 5 2
 ♥ A 9 7 5 4
 ♦ 6 3 2
 ♣ J 10 6

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ K Q 10 8 6 4
 ♥ J 8
 ♦ Q 8 7
 ♣ A 4

♠ A J 7 3
 ♥ 2
 ♦ 10 9 4
 ♣ K 9 7 3 2

North had the deal and bid a Diamond. Even with the modern style of bidding, most players would prefer the Heart bid. East bid a Spade and South a No Trump.

West passed, North now showed the Hearts, East went to two Spades and South called two No Trumps. North persisted with three Hearts to show he had a real bid, East passed and South called three No Trumps, which closed the bidding. The Spade was opened and the Queen was permitted to hold the first trick. The eight of Spades was won by the Jack and a low Club led. South reasoned that East could not hold both the Ace of Clubs and the Ace of Hearts, or he would have doubled the contract. But which Ace was in the West hand was entirely a guess. As West held but two Spades, marked both by the play of the five and two as well as by the bidding, the chances were that he held length in Hearts. If so, the chances also favored his holding the Ace of Hearts. The importance of at once taking out East's cards of re-entry was paramount. The reason that South did not win the first round of Spades was, that if West held the Ace of Clubs, he probably would not have another Spade to lead to his partner. However, East took the Queen of Clubs with the Ace and cleared the Spades. South now led the Heart and West playing low, dummy won with the Queen. The Club was then led and the ten permitted to win Fourth Hand. It is apparent that this was the correct play, as the Club in dummy is the only re-entry that permits South to get in his hand to bring in the suit. On West's Diamond lead, North puts up the King and leads the Club for three tricks in that suit. The last three cards that South held were two Diamonds and the seven of Spades. East held the Queen and eight of Diamonds and the King of Spades. To guard his Queen of Diamonds, he was forced to disgorge on the Clubs, two good Spades and the Jack of Hearts. South diagnosed the situation correctly and ploughed him in the lead with the

Spade, compelling him to lead up to the tenace in Diamonds for the game-going trick.

The student will note that while this hand can be played so that East and West can take in but one trick in Clubs—by leading a low Club from the North hand and taking the finesse obligatory on the return—the game cannot be won that way, because South will have no way of getting in, after his Spade reëntry is taken out.

Another deal when the play was based on keeping a certain player out of the lead, was the following:

		♠ J 7 5	
		♥ A J 6 4	
		♦ 10 7 3	
		♣ K 7 4	
♠ 9 6 3 2			♠ Q 10 4
♥ Q 7 5 2			♥ 8 3
♦ A 6 2			♦ Q J 9 8 5
♣ A Q			♣ J 9 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A K 8	
		♥ K 10 9	
		♦ K 4	
		♣ 10 8 6 3 2	

South's No Trump was not overcalled and West opened the two of Hearts, which was won by the ten. The Club was led and the Queen was allowed to hold Second Hand. It is obvious that the Declarant must lose at least two tricks in Clubs and it should be equally apparent that if East secures the lead he will probably switch to the

Diamond, a lead that would be most distasteful to South. Unless West holds three suits of four cards each, he should hold the Ace of Clubs and can be compelled to win both Club tricks. West continued with the Hearts and South won with the King, so that he could finesse the Jack in dummy on the third round. Another Club lead was won by the Ace and the Spade shift was of no avail. Three tricks in Clubs, four in Hearts and two in Spades won the game. Winning the first Club trick with the King, or in the event of the Ace going up on the first round, taking the second Club trick with the King, permits East to obtain the lead with the Jack and save the game, or even defeat the contract.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

WHEN COUNTING COUNTS

THE reason Bridge has such a fascination for so many players, is doubtless because fine play is so generously rewarded. When a player progresses to the point where he can count up an opponent's hand almost to a certainty, then the game takes on a glamour that is entirely foreign to most card games. The easiest way to acquire such skill is to closely follow the play and deductions of the leading experts, who seemingly play some hands as though all the cards were exposed. While it is too much to expect that every deal will lend itself to such treatment, there are sufficient hands that may be counted, to amply repay the student for the expenditure of brain force required to become proficient in this helpful art. That card-reading is somewhat more of an exact science than is generally supposed, can be readily seen by proper application to the following hands:

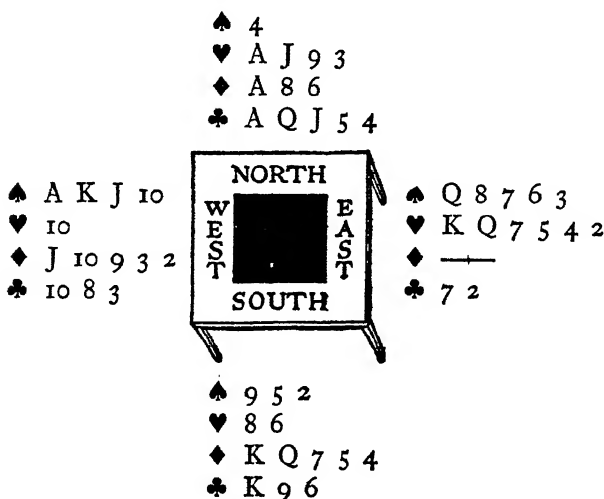
	♠ 9 4 3	
	♥ A 10	
	♦ K J 9 8 4	
	♣ A 9 6	
♠ K 7 3	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>	♠ J 10 6 2
♥ 10 8 6 2		♥ J 5
♦ 5 10 7 3		♦ 6 2
♣ 10		♣ J 8 7 3 2
	♠ A Q 8	
	♥ K 7 4 3	
	♦ 10 5	
	♣ K Q 5 4	

South dealt and bid a No Trump. There was no further bidding and West opened the six of Hearts. At first glance it appears that the game is easy for the Declarant. Three tricks each in Clubs and Diamonds, two in Hearts and one in Spades, will score the game.

Nevertheless, at fifteen tables of duplicate play only one player succeeded in making the game. The trouble lay with the uneven distribution of the Diamond suit. West had six tricks in the suit, if he plays correctly, and takes the Hearts before the Declarant can set the Diamonds. With three Heart and two Diamond tricks to take the game seems impossible. The general procedure, when the Diamond situation was disclosed, was to take the Ace against the King of Spades. If the King had been in the East hand, probably every player would have made the game. The winning play, after the first Heart was won by the King was as follows: The ten of Dia-

monds was led, West winning with the Ace and leading the two of Hearts. The Declarant put his hand in with the Queen of Clubs and finessed the eight of Diamonds. When the King of Diamonds did not drop the Queen, the time to "count up" had arrived. West was now known to have held nine cards in Hearts and Diamonds. If he held exactly three Clubs, that suit would "split" and the game was assured. He could not hold four Clubs or East would have held seven Spades to the King-Jack-ten, a combination that would unquestionably have been bid. If he held one or two Clubs, the discards would be most illuminating. South took the lead with the King of Clubs, West discarding the five of Spades, but the next Club lead put West in difficulties. To guard his Spade King he was forced to give up a Heart. His hand is now counted with two Hearts, two Spades and a Diamond. He is thrown in the lead with the Diamond and after making his two Hearts, there is no alternative but to lead up to the major tenace in Spades. It will be noted that the Clubs were played so as to have North in the lead on the third round to take the Spade finesse if thought expedient. If West had discarded another Spade—without evidencing too much anguish—he might have made his singleton King, but unfortunately, the standard of play has not yet reached the heights where West could foresee what was going to happen. In the great majority of cases, West's play would have saved the game.

A deal where the bidding had much to do with counting the hand required most exact play to win the game:



West had the deal and bid a Spade, which North doubled. East jumped to two Spades. A bid of three or even four Spades by East would have been better. Four Spades can be made by normal play. However, South overcalled with three Diamonds and finally secured the contract at four Diamonds, doubled by West. The King of Spades was opened and followed with the ten of Hearts, which dummy won with the Ace. A low Club put South in to ruff a Spade, and after that it seemed very much guesswork. West's double of a bid that would not win the game undoubled, marks him with positive trump strength. Especially so, as he apparently has no top card strength in Hearts or Clubs. Without five Diamonds his double would be very bad. With five Diamonds he cannot be prevented from making two tricks in that suit anyway, so the only chance appears to be that the Heart lead was a singleton. If his original bid was

from a five-card suit, then he is marked with a singleton in either Hearts or Clubs. Continuing the Club suit seems to be the best play and when East does not echo on the second round, it is fair to presume that the strong trump hand will be forced. On the fourth round of Clubs, South discards a Heart and whether West leads a trump or a Spade, after taking the ruff, the Declarant will make his doubled contract, losing only one Spade and two trumps. East's judgment in leaving the double stand was not of the best. While it is quite possible that the Diamond contract may be defeated for a trick or two, the game at Spades looks fairly safe, as the long Heart suit is a powerful factor of strength.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

ADDED POSSIBILITIES

THERE are very few deals at Bridge where the game can be made against any distribution of the cards. When the opposing cards are divided with a fair degree of normalcy, a hand may be played conventionally and the game scored without any difficulty. Holding the same cards against a slightly different distribution the game may be impossible, or the contract may even be badly defeated when the cards are "all wrong." On innumerable hands the game hinges on the probability of the adverse trumps being split, of a certain finesse standing up, or of some particular King preceding or succeeding the enemy Ace. Much in regard to the distribution and location of the cards may be learned from the bidding and early play, but such information can rarely be regarded as positive. The clever player is always ready to change his tactics and reconstruct his play in conformity with unexpected situations.

With the great majority of players, the success of a close hand is nearly always predicated upon a certain line of play. If it is "thumbs up" they think they are playing well. When it is "thumbs down" they are sunk! The expert takes the natural games as a matter of course and is constantly on the lookout for the added chance that will give him the game when the circumstances are unpropitious. On the following deal few players would go beyond the ordinary routine to try for game on this hand:

		♠ 9 8 6 4	
		♥ 6 4	
		♦ 3	
		♣ K Q J 8 6 4	
♠ J			♠ K Q 2
♥ Q 10 8 2			♥ 9 3
♦ K 10 9 6 2			♦ A 8 5 4
♣ A 7 3			♣ 10 9 5 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>W [REDACTED] E</p> <p>S [REDACTED] T</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>		
		♠ A 10 7 5 3	
		♥ A K J 7 5	
		♦ Q J 7	
		♣ —	

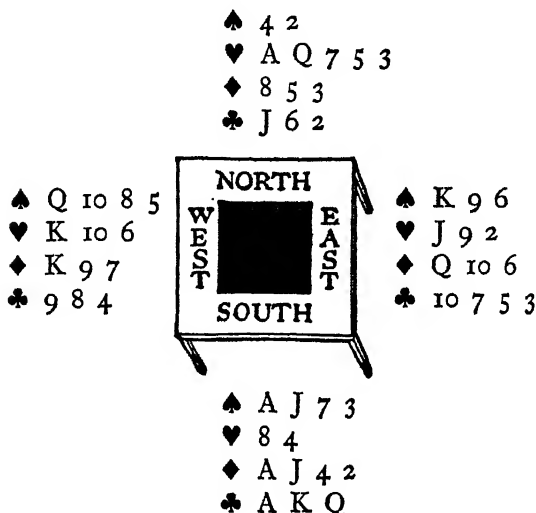
South had the deal and bid a Spade. It may seem to many players that Hearts would be a better bid but the tendency now among the ranking players is to always bid the highest of two Major suits, when holding proper values, even if the lower suit is considerably stronger. The idea is, that, when the second suit is bid, the partner can go back to the first suit without increasing the contract, while if he prefers the second he can simply pass. When there is no further bidding and therefore no opportunity to show the second suit, the game should usually be easy. With this hand West bid two Diamonds and North jumped to three Spades, trying to prevent the Hearts from being shown. With four trumps and the long Club suit, a jump bid was good strategy. East, nothing daunted, went to four Diamonds and South called four Spades. It should be noted that his partner's jump bid prevented South from showing his Hearts. Under the cir-

cumstances a Heart bid, which would give valuable information to the opponents, would have been bad play.

South's bid was passed all around and the six of Diamonds was opened and won by the Ace. East then led the two of Spades, undoubtedly his best play. The lead of a high trump could hardly gain and might easily lose a trick. South won with the Ace and returned the trump on the hope that they were evenly divided, in which case he would win the game by setting up the Clubs. This line of play set the contract for two tricks. A better play would have been to have tried for the Hearts. Of course the third round would have been overruffed by East, and the play of his last trump would have set the hand for one trick. However, if the Declarant had played the hand with allowance for the added possibility that neither the trumps nor Hearts would break, he still could make the game on this hand. East's play on the first trick of the Ace of Diamonds, as well as the bidding, marks the King of that suit with West. When South takes the second trick, he should have played the Queen of Diamonds and upon West's cover with the King, trump in dummy. (If West refuses to cover, a Heart discard is taken.) South regains the lead with a Heart and discards dummy's last Heart on the Jack of Diamonds. Now, a losing Heart is ruffed, the Ace being retained, and the King of Clubs led. Not succeeding in getting a cover with the Ace, South must ruff and play another low Heart and again trump in dummy. East will overtrump and draw the last trump but the rest of the tricks are safe for Declarant. Two Spades and one Diamond are the maximum that can be made against perfect defense.

When a deal comes along that has but one added chance

to land the game, it is vitally important to have a speaking acquaintance with the A. C.



South dealt and bid a No Trump, which North overcalled with two Hearts. On North's normal distribution, I would prefer to pass partner's No Trump. South went to two No Trumps, which secured the contract. The five of Spades was opened and the King went to the Ace. The Declarant led a Heart, finessing the Queen, and followed with the Ace. West played the King under the Ace as South could not hold the Jack. Not only would the Jack block the suit in dummy but the bid of two No Trumps probably denied a holding of three Hearts to a Jack, of the partner's Major suit bid. West's play permitted East to obtain the lead with the Jack of Hearts and lead through the guarded honor in Spades, setting

the contract one trick. South's play was very bad as, when the Queen of Hearts held, an immediate switch to the Diamonds would have given him eight tricks for his contract, and perfect play would have won the game. The opening lead of the five, with three low Spades in sight, marks West with only a four-card suit. The four of Hearts should be led and West's six underplayed with the five in dummy. The opponents should be given every opportunity to make a mistake. However, East would overtake the trick with the nine, if he were awake, and lead the nine of Spades through, picking up three tricks in that suit. After the three Spades and one Heart trick the requiem would be in order. Declarant would get in on the next lead and finesse the Queen of Hearts for the balance of the tricks. The added possibility would mean the game.

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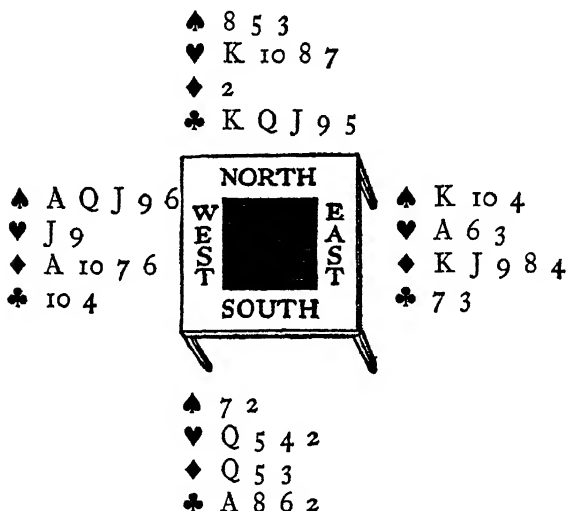
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

INFERENCES THAT WIN

WINNING play at Auction Bridge is as much a matter of good defensive tactics on the part of the opponents of the Declarant, as it is correct play by the other side. When certain cards are definitely located by the bidding, it does not require exceptional merit to lead the one and only card that is capable of saving the game. Very often the information is of a negative nature and entirely inferential. The player who habitually reads such situations correctly is the one who derives the greatest amount of enjoyment out of the game and quickly acquires the reputation of being a clever player.

At the Canadian Championships played at Toronto, one of the most innocuous looking hands was productive of the greatest variation. Game for the East and West players seemed a rather simple procedure at every table but two. At these two tables the North and South pairs scored, by defeating the contract, which was of material assistance in making a net plus score on the North and South cards. Mrs. Irene Haultain, playing with the writer, made a plus of 1040 points, leading the second pair by 600 points. The next eleven pairs each turned in scores registering a net minus. It must be admitted that the bidding and play of the following hand shows nothing remarkable or brilliant. In fact, it appeared so prosaic that

eleven tournament players seemed to think that there was but one way to play it.



South dealt and passed, West bid a Spade and North overcalled with two Clubs. At my table East jumped to three Spades and I at the South position, ventured to four Clubs. This was one trick more than we could make, but West went to four Spades and bought the contract. The King of Clubs was opened and followed with the Queen. At the third trick the crux of the deal had arrived. It was apparent that the Clubs could not be continued and a switch was in order. At some tables the trump was led to throw the lead. This enabled the Declarant to set up a Diamond and discard the losing Heart. At most of the tables, however, North switched to the singleton Diamond on the premise that the game was lost

unless partner held the Ace. If this were so, the second Diamond would be ruffed and the game saved at once. In fact, at two tables the Diamond switch was made at the second trick, permitting the enemy to make eleven tricks. Careful consideration of the bidding precludes the probability of the Ace of Diamonds being in the South hand, even though the Club bid was raised from two to four. If South held the Ace of Diamonds in addition to the four Clubs headed by the Ace, which is marked in the hand, an original bid would have been made instead of a pass. The importance of showing two sure tricks, first or second hand, when it is at all feasible is too valuable a convention to be ignored. Should the Declarant hold both the Ace and Queen of Diamonds, then the game is probably lost against any defense, but the best chance is to endeavor to set up a trick in Hearts before the Diamonds are established. Mrs. Haultain, at the third trick led a low Heart, which was taken by the Ace and four rounds of Spades were played, but a Diamond discard was not forthcoming. The Declarant had no guide to the Diamonds and holding nine cards of the suit, he naturally played for the break, as a losing finesse would mean a losing Heart and a lost game. West led the ten of Diamonds—hopefully. He played the King in dummy and returned the Jack—expectantly. Not obtaining a cover, he went up with the Ace—and the joy of life was turned to bitterness.

A hand where the Declarant was in a position to force the game against natural defense, provided he did not make an early careless play, illustrates the ever occurring situation, where the importance of throwing the lead is just as valuable as it is to obtain it:

eleven tournament players seemed to think that there was but one way to play it.

♠ 8 5 3
♥ K 10 8 7
♦ 2
♣ K Q J 9 5

♠ A Q J 9 6
♥ J 9
♦ A 10 7 6
♣ 10 4

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ K 10 4
♥ A 6 3
♦ K J 9 8 4
♣ 7 3

♠ 7 2
♥ Q 5 4 2
♦ Q 5 3
♣ A 8 6 2

South dealt and passed, West bid a Spade and North overcalled with two Clubs. At my table East jumped to three Spades and I at the South position, ventured to four Clubs. This was one trick more than we could make, but West went to four Spades and bought the contract. The King of Clubs was opened and followed with the Queen. At the third trick the crux of the deal had arrived. It was apparent that the Clubs could not be continued and a switch was in order. At some tables the trump was led to throw the lead. This enabled the Declarant to set up a Diamond and discard the losing Heart. At most of the tables, however, North switched to the singleton Diamond on the premise that the game was lost

unless partner held the Ace. If this were so, the second Diamond would be ruffed and the game saved at once. In fact, at two tables the Diamond switch was made at the second trick, permitting the enemy to make eleven tricks. Careful consideration of the bidding precludes the probability of the Ace of Diamonds being in the South hand, even though the Club bid was raised from two to four. If South held the Ace of Diamonds in addition to the four Clubs headed by the Ace, which is marked in the hand, an original bid would have been made instead of a pass. The importance of showing two sure tricks, first or second hand, when it is at all feasible is too valuable a convention to be ignored. Should the Declarant hold both the Ace and Queen of Diamonds, then the game is probably lost against any defense, but the best chance is to endeavor to set up a trick in Hearts before the Diamonds are established. Mrs. Haultain, at the third trick led a low Heart, which was taken by the Ace and four rounds of Spades were played, but a Diamond discard was not forthcoming. The Declarant had no guide to the Diamonds and holding nine cards of the suit, he naturally played for the break, as a losing finesse would mean a losing Heart and a lost game. West led the ten of Diamonds—hopefully. He played the King in dummy and returned the Jack—expectantly. Not obtaining a cover, he went up with the Ace—and the joy of life was turned to bitterness.

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	♠ —	
	♥ 9 8 6 5 3 2	
	♦ K 10 2	
	♣ Q J 7 5	
♠ A K Q 9 7	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ 10 8 6 5 2
♥ K 4		♥ —
♦ A J 5 3		♦ Q 9 8 6 4
♣ 6 3		♣ K 10 9
	♠ J 4 3	
	♥ A Q J 10 7	
	♦ 7	
	♣ A 8 4 2	

South bid a Heart, West a Spade and North jumped to four Hearts. North was quite correct in surmising that game at Spades is almost a certainty for the enemy. East properly went to four Spades, South called five Hearts which was doubled by West and all passed. Even with the cards exposed it looks as if the contract must be set for a trick—one Heart, one Diamond and one Club going to the opponents. The Spade was opened and ruffed in dummy. To try for the trumps before the Clubs would be a fatal error. The Queen of Clubs lead, covered by the King and Ace, must be followed by the Diamond. West should hop up with the Ace and play another Spade, which is again ruffed and a trump led. East showing out, the trick is taken with the Ace and the last Spade ruffed in dummy. Now the Diamond King affords a Club discard, the last Diamond is led and ruffed and the Club puts dummy in with the Jack. Having eliminated everything

from the hands but trumps and Clubs, West is put in the lead with the King of Hearts. North holds two Clubs and a trump while South is down to two trumps and one Club. Whether West leads a Spade or a Diamond, the Dummy ruffs with the last trump while South discards his losing Club. It is obvious that the game is impossible if the mistake is made of at once leading the trumps. Unless West is a "geck," he will cash in his King of trumps when he is in with the Ace of Diamonds and so prevent the Declarant from compelling him to take the lead when the stage is all set for the final coup.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

FORCING THE ISSUE

WHEN the natural play of a hand cannot net enough tricks to win the game, it is incumbent upon the Declarant to try some other method that may achieve better results. Very often the player knows exactly what he would like to do, but for various reasons, he is unable to accomplish his purpose.

A deal played in a duplicate team match, which was bid precisely alike at both tables, contained all the elements of this interesting situation. At one table the player took a chance that the opponents would err in their defense, while at the other table, the issue was forced against the best procedure on the part of the adversaries.

That the result of the match depended upon the play of this hand made the deal of particular interest.

ceeded to establish the Clubs. Should West when in the lead with the fourth round of Clubs, play anything but a Heart, the game will be won. Or, if East discards one of the Hearts, either to protect his Spades or as a "come-on" for the Hearts, the game may still be landed. Against expert defense, neither of these contingencies took place. East discarded three Spades and West batted off his Hearts, starting with the Ace and following with the Queen, holding the Declarant down to eight tricks. While South recognized the fact that there was a game in the hand, with the King of Spades in the East position, he could only bemoan the unkind fate that did not put a single Spade in the North hand for a lead through the King.

The play at the other table was precisely the same up to the point where three rounds of Diamonds had been played and the Club led through. West, of course, played the Jack and dummy won with the King. Right here the Declarant stopped to delve a bit into the intricacies of distribution possibilities. That the dangerous Heart suit against him was probably divided four and three seemed very likely, as the suit had not been bid, although four honors were outstanding. If this premise was correct, then the game could be won by forcing the opponents either to lead the Spades or continue the Clubs. Should four Hearts be with West and the Spade lead forced from that hand, the game would be like manna from the Gods. Should East lead the Spade, then the Declarant obtains the fifty-fifty chance he is playing for. So, the lead of a Heart from dummy, apparently the worst play in the hand, permits the Declarant to make the game against any defense. When the eight of Hearts was the high card played Third Hand, West eyed the proceedings with deep

distrust. He refused to be ploughed in the lead with the third round of Hearts, so he won the trick with the Queen and at once played the Ace and nine. East made the last two Hearts and then the Spade lead was forthcoming. The Queen finesse won and the party was over!

A hand where the game could only be made by forcing the opponents to make a wrong guess, might have been saved by the perfect defense of either adversary. When the Declarant gave them the opportunity to make a mistake, he did his all.

♠ 10
 ♥ A J 7 5
 ♦ Q 6
 ♣ A Q J 10 8 4

♠ Q 9 8 4 3 2
 ♥ K 4
 ♦ A 8 7 5
 ♣ 7

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ K 7 5
 ♥ Q 10 8 2
 ♦ K 4 3 2
 ♣ 9 6

♠ A J 6
 ♥ 9 6 3
 ♦ J 10 9
 ♣ K 5 3 2

South had the deal and passed. West also passed and North bid a Club. South now went to No Trump and secured the contract.

West led the four of Spades and East's King was taken by the Ace. The Declarant has eight tricks easily but the game trick is only possible if he can either set up a

Diamond or put West in the lead and he continues the Spades. If the six Clubs are made at once the opponents' discards should prove more informative to each other than to the Declarant. Usually it is the other way around, but on this hand, South has nothing to play for but the Diamond. The second trick was taken by the King of Clubs and another round was won in dummy with the ten. Now, the six of Diamonds was led and the nine forced the Ace. At this stage it appears to West that unless he cashes in the top Spade, a little slam may be made against him. The Clubs are solid and if the Diamonds are also established it is all over but the scoring. The play of the Queen of Spades gives the game to the Declarant. The East player seemed to think that his partner had shown bad judgment in playing the top Spade, but as the hand was played, clever tactics by East would not only have saved the game, but have defeated the contract.

When the Diamond is led, South has already shown up with the Ace of Spades and the King of Clubs. Having passed originally, precludes all possibility that he could also hold the Ace of Diamonds. East should have gone up Second Hand with the King of Diamonds and led the Spade through, thereby preventing the partner from making a natural mistake and qualifying himself for a niche in the Hall of Fame, as a card-reader par excellence.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

THE NEGATION THEORY

UNLESS a player knows the fundamentals of correct bidding, many game hands will be lost by lack of team-work and playing at cross purposes. One of the most common faults of many players is the rescue of partners' No Trump bid in a minor suit, when holding excellent support for the higher-ranking bid. With an advanced score, such a procedure may be quite proper, but at a love score, it is usually a game-losing process.

There are players who can no more resist bidding four honors in one hand than they can refrain from breathing.

		♠ 10 9 6	
		♥ 10 5	
		♦ Q	
		♣ A K Q J 6 4 2	
♠ 8 7 5			♠ K Q J 2
♥ K Q 8 3			♥ 7 6 4 2
♦ A 10 5 4 2			♦ J 8 7 3
♣ 9			♣ 8
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST EAST </div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST EAST </div> SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 4 3	
		♥ A J 9	
		♦ K 9 6	
		♣ 10 7 5 3	

With this hand South bid a No Trump, West passed and North overcalled with two Clubs. There was no further bidding and East opened the King of Spades for the first lead. Of course, the game at Clubs was an impossibility, while at No Trumps it was a lay down for four odd. That South should have bid two No Trumps is extremely doubtful. With the partner denying top-card strength and the original No Trump bid somewhat attenuated, a bid of two might be doubled and defeated for hundreds of points. If the rescue bid is sound, it seems better to take a small score at Clubs than a large penalty at No Trumps. After the hand was played, North's comment was naïve: "Partner, I had to bid my Clubs because I had so many that you might be entirely void, and as I had no card of reëntry, you could never get my hand in." This remark carries us back to our preamble regarding the bidding fundamentals. An original No Trump should never be bid with a void suit, and very rarely with a singleton. A missing suit in a hand that is sufficiently strong for a No Trump, makes the holding so powerful at a trump make that the good players do not even consider a No Trump call. On the hand in discussion, it is very questionable whether a bid of two No Trumps by South would have silenced his partner. Generally, when a player is afraid that the partner has none of his suit, his fears are not assuaged by further bidding from the partner.

A hand played in duplicate at the Knickerbocker Whist Club, illustrates the other side of this argument—when a minor suit take-out is justifiable. I am ashamed to state how many players went back to their No Trumps—with dire results.

♠ 8 5 2
♥ J 6 2
♦ 4
♣ Q J 9 6 5 2

♠ Q 10 7 6 4
♥ 10 8 3
♦ 10 3 2
♣ 8 4

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ K 9 3
♥ A 9 4
♦ Q J 9 7
♣ 10 7 3

♠ A J
♥ K Q 7 5
♦ A K 8 6 5
♣ A K

South had the deal and bid a No Trump, which West passed and North took out with two Clubs. Where South went on with the No Trump, North thought that his partner had enough Clubs to bring in the suit and subsided. If South had held a low Club with his Ace and King, the rebid of No Trumps would be proper, as he holds a very strong hand. At Clubs, a small slam will be made with the normal opening of a Diamond and five odd tricks is in the hand against any defense. Played at two No Trumps, the hand will be defeated for one trick by proper opposing play. East must refuse to permit the Declarant to make the Jack of Hearts a card of reëntry for the Club suit, by holding up the Ace until the third round of the suit is played.

Playing a hand in actual play and replaying it at double-dummy—with all the cards exposed—seems a very

different proposition and yet close application to the bidding, together with the knowledge of what proper bidding means, may permit a player to map out his *motif* along exactly parallel lines.

♠ 10
 ♥ A 9 8 4 3
 ♦ 8 5 3 2
 ♣ 10 5 3

♠ 8 2
 ♥ K J 10
 ♦ A K 10
 ♣ K Q 9 7 2

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ K 6 5
 ♥ Q 7 6
 ♦ 9 7 4
 ♣ J 8 6 4

♠ A Q J 9 7 4 3
 ♥ 5 2
 ♦ Q J 6
 ♣ A

This deal was played in a duplicate match and with precisely similar bidding and opening lead. Nevertheless, the difference in the score was nearly six hundred points.

West was the dealer and bid a No Trump, which passed around to South, who called two Spades. West doubled informatively and East went to two No Trumps. East was not strong enough to leave the double stand and the No Trumps appears to have a better chance for game than a bid of three Clubs. South doubled and all passed. It will be noted that a double of two No Trumps is always for business and the partner is not asked to bid. When the partner makes a business double he assumes com-

mand. of that deal and his suit must be led at once, except when the leader can retain the lead, by laying down a winner from a top honor combination. The ten of Spades was led and South permitted it to hold, hoping to make every trick in the suit. Unfortunately, his partner was unable to come through again and switched to a Heart. The Declarant won the trick and led a Club, which South took with the Ace and cleared the Spades, trusting to get in with the Diamond to make some of his remaining Spades.

With four tricks in Clubs, two each in Diamonds and Hearts and one in Spades, the Declarant scored three odd—one more than the doubled contract.

Where the deal was correctly played, South overtook the ten of Spades with the Jack and cleared the suit before the Ace of Clubs was taken out of his hand. This procedure defeated the contract for three hundred points. There was no guess-work here! Unless West had bid a No Trump with a singleton low Spade, North could not have another Spade to lead. Even supposing that West was a very poor player and bid a No Trumper regardless of distribution, in that event he might hold only one Spade, but—why be a Shylock?

A penalty of three hundred is always better than a poke in the eye with a rusty nail.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

SAFETY FIRST

TIME and again I have proclaimed to the eager populace that the reward for good play at Auction Bridge is far greater than at any other card game.

Yet every player has often heard the trite remark so popular and with the perennial loser, "give me my share of the Aces and Kings and I'll take my chances with any of the experts." If a rubber is finally lost on a really unfortunate "break" of the cards, this class of player quite forgets the two or three bad plays earlier in the game, that would have won the rubber beyond any peradventure. A hand played in a duplicate tournament, illustrates the tremendous difference between "guessing" and "knowing" the proper play to make.

♠ K 10 6
♥ 6 5 3
♦ A 10 8 2
♣ 9 7 5

♠ Q 9
♥ Q 10 9 8 7
♦ 9 4 3
♣ K J 2

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ A 5 3
♥ J 4 2
♦ J 6
♣ 10 8 6 4 3

♠ J 8 7 4 2
♥ A K
♦ K Q 7 5
♣ A O

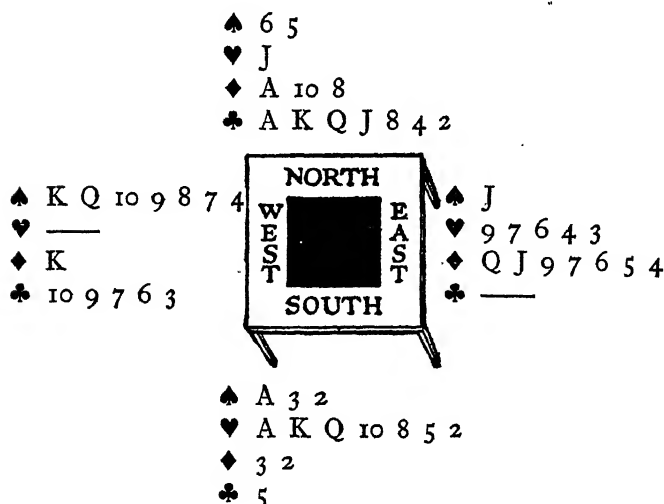
South, as dealer, bid a No Trump, West overcalling with two Hearts. The unfortunate thing in Bridge is, that every so often a poor bid of this kind will stand to win, especially against weak opposition. If this bid had driven the opponents into Spades, the hand could not have been played badly enough to lose the game. However, South went on to two No Trumps, which bid landed the contract. The eight of Hearts was opened and the Jack forced out the King. A low Spade was then led, and the nine Second Hand gave the Declarant a hard "guess." If the Ace was with West, as his bid would indicate, two rounds of the suit could be taken before the Ace of Hearts was forced out and that suit set up. On this reasoning the King of Spades was played, which East won with the Ace and cleared the Hearts. With the Hearts established, the Declarant thought it best to abandon the Spade suit and run with his Diamonds. The fourth round of Diamonds was won in dummy, West discarding the two of Clubs, which encouraged South to finesse the Queen and the contract was defeated one trick—three Hearts, two Spades and one Club going to the enemy.

At the next table, the hand was also played at No Trumps and the best that could be done with the deal was to make twelve tricks for a Small Slam.

Here the Hearts were not bid, but the suit was opened and won as before. On the Spade lead, however, the Declarant did not think he had a "guess." When the nine was played, West could hold the Queen, Ace, both or—neither. If he held only the Ace, then East held the Queen twice guarded and two Spade tricks must be lost. The finesse of the ten of Spades must be the best play, as it has an even chance to win with nothing to lose. When the ten drove out the Ace the Heart was returned and the

Declarant gathered in four Spade and four Diamond tricks, keeping the lead in dummy at the end. The last two cards in the North hand were the six of Hearts and the nine of Clubs. South had the Ace and Queen of Clubs, West, much harassed, held the Queen of Hearts and the King-Jack of Clubs, but had still a discard to make on the last Diamond. As a matter of actual play, West disgorged the Heart and the Declarant "luckily" remembered that the six would beat the deuce. The Ace of Spades was the only trick make against the Declarant.

Another curious slam hand played in the same match was defeated at thirteen tables and made at only two. This deal presented difficulties that were quite out of the ordinary.



South dealt and properly preempted with four Hearts—two tricks more than the value of the hand. At most.

tables West bid four Spades. Even if this bid is doubled and defeated for three tricks, the loss is less than losing a Small Slam at Hearts. North, however, bid five Hearts, which was the correct call. After partner's bid, assisting the Hearts was better than showing the Clubs. An initial bid of "four" does not require length in trumps from the partner. East in every instance but one, refrained from doubling and the hand was played at five Hearts. The opening lead of the King of Spades was won by the Ace and it seems that a Grand Slam is in sight. The normal play appears to be the lead of a low Heart, putting dummy in with the Jack. Then a high Club, followed by a loser, which South ruffs and draws the adverse trumps—the Ace of Diamonds being a reëntry for the balance of the Club suit. Of course, appearances are deceptive, because East trumps the first round of Clubs and leads a Diamond, which play clogs up the machinery so effectively that the Declarant is thrown for a loss of two tricks, instead of scoring the slam he had in view.

While the distribution on this deal was most unusual, it should not have been wholly unexpected. Both the North and South hands contain a seven-card suit, together with a singleton. The West hand is likewise marked with a suit of seven cards in Spades, both from the bidding and East's play of the Jack under the Ace. If East holds a seven-card suit—it must be in Diamonds—and a singleton Spade, he can have but five cards in Hearts and Clubs. Should these five cards be Hearts, the result will be disastrous! If, as is more likely, the suits be divided, then nothing can be lost by playing the hand on the "safety first" principle. South, when in on the first lead, should play the Ace of Hearts. Unless all the missing Hearts are in one hand, the Grand Slam is assured, and a Small Slam

must be made against any distribution of the cards. It must be admitted that the Declarant had a bad moment when West did not follow suit on the first round of Hearts, but the ultimate result was highly agreeable and satisfactory.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

BORDERLINE HANDS

IF every deal at Bridge presented a difficult play or a problem hand, many of our greatest enthusiasts would be relegated to some other card game. It is quite true that a large percentage of the hands require but a perfunctory knowledge to obtain very fair results.

Often a game can be made entirely by virtue of the high cards held and it makes little difference whether the play is good or bad. Again, a poor player may win the game because the cards are happily placed for him, while the expert can do no better, although with a less fortunate distribution, he would still have been successful. When, however, the game can be won by only one method of play and lost by every other, then the skilled artist reaps the reward for his superior skill. On the close deals that are on the borderline—where either side may win the game or be defeated a trick—the nicety of judgment required to decide whether to go for the contract or to double the enemy, must often be predicated upon the ability to play the hand for the maximum. Players who bid correctly and play the cards perfectly, seem to be curiously favored by Providence with more than their share of the high cards. I wonder why?

A hand that illustrates a neat point in bidding, together with a simple play that many players would not have seen, is shown in the following hand. That the play

meant the difference between winning the game and rubber, or being penalized for a hundred points, makes it particularly noticeable.

♠ K 8
 ♥ 4
 ♦ A J 7 3 2
 ♣ A K J 6 3

♠ 10 3
 ♥ K 8 5 3
 ♦ Q 10 9
 ♣ 10 7 5 4

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ A J 7
 ♥ A Q J 9 6 2
 ♦ K 5
 ♣ Q 9

♠ Q 9 6 5 4 2
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ 8 6 4
 ♣ 8 2

North had the deal and bid a Club. East bid a Heart and South a Spade. Many players would consider this last bid unsound, but it must be borne in mind that it is not an original bid and while it should never be made originally, after the partner's Club bid and Second Hand overcall, its status is considerably altered. If the Ace and King of Clubs were in South's hand, it would unquestionably have been a sound original bid of a Spade. North having made an opening bid, thereby showing two tricks, permits South to visualize his hand as if his cards contained the tricks shown by his partner. This procedure may be of help to inexperienced players in properly valuing their hands. West passed the Spade bid and North bid two

Diamonds. North shows his second suit on the reasoning that if neither East or South can rebid, the game should be possible at the better of his minor suits, the choice being left to his partner. East went to two Hearts, South and West passed and North now called two Spades. This last bid is quite illuminating. After apparently denying partner's bid, the rebid tends to picture North's holding almost exactly. He holds normal support in Spades, at least three quick tricks and ten or eleven cards in the minor suits. If South holds more than the minimum in his suit he is asked to continue it, as there is more than a fair chance for game at the best of the three suits shown. East goes to three Hearts, South three Spades and West, having in mind his partner's three unassisted calls, helps him to four. North now bids four Spades, which East doubles and all hands pass. The opening lead is the three of Hearts, East winning with the Ace and returning the Queen. West on his lead of the three is marked with four Hearts, so the Declarant must hold one more. Ruffing the dummy permits East to make two tricks in trumps. The King of Spades is taken by the Ace and the Hearts continued. South trumps and after playing the Queen of Spades, a Club is led, but the finesse of the Jack is not taken. If the opposing Clubs are evenly divided, the game is won without the finesse. When the Queen falls on the second round, the Jack of Clubs gives Declarant one Diamond discard and if East refuses to trump with the top Spade, another Club should be led and trumped by South, setting up a Club in dummy for a discard of the second losing Diamond. Of course, if East plays properly and trumps the Jack of Clubs, the hand must be defeated, because dummy holds but one card of reëntry, and although the Club suit may be cleared, it cannot be made.

Instead of leading the Jack of Clubs, dummy has an alternative play that wins the game against any defense. A low Club should be led and ruffed by the Declarant. East is then stuck in with the Jack of Spades and the remaining tricks are taken by the Declarant. Unless the trump is led at the ninth trick, East will ruff the Jack of Clubs when dummy gets in with the Ace of Diamonds and the last Club cannot be used to afford a necessary discard of the second Diamond.

Very often hands come up that seem to have no opening for unusual or skilful play. The only chance appears to be that the Declarant may succeed in guessing correctly. When the onus of doing the guessing can be thrown upon the adversaries, it may be a great help in winning the game.

	♠ 8 5	
	♥ 10 8 6 4	
	♦ K J 10 3	
	♣ A J 9	
♠ K 9 6 3 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NORTH </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WEST <div style="background-color: black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> EAST </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> SOUTH </div> </div>	♠ Q J 4
♥ A 7 3		♥ J 9 5 2
♦ 7 6 2		♦ 8 5 4
♣ 5 4		♣ Q 6 2
	♠ A 10 7	
	♥ K Q	
	♦ A Q 9	
	♣ K 10 8 7 3	

South dealt and bought the contract for one No Trump. The three of Spades was opened and the Declarant held

off until the third round. It is apparent that if the Queen of Clubs can be located that ten tricks and game are in sight. The Club can be finessed either way but there is absolutely no guide as to the better way. If four rounds of Diamonds are played, with the hope of getting a Club discard from the enemy, then the finesse can only be taken one way, because if South takes the lead with the King of Clubs and finesses the Jack on the second round, whether it wins or loses is immaterial, as the Clubs are blocked with the Ace and South has no quick reentry card. The play of the hand was to lead the nine of Diamonds, overtake with the ten and lead the Jack of Clubs, to coax a cover from East. If the cover is not forthcoming, the better play is to go up with the King and finesse the nine on the return. The chances favor this play because East is marked out of Spades and if the Ace of Hearts is with East, the game must still be won, as West cannot get in to bring in the Spade suit. To deliberately finesse into the hand that holds the set-up suit in Spades looks like poor play, but the extra chance to permit the enemy to go wrong should be taken. In the actual play of this deal, East covered with the Queen, hoping to make up the ten in partner's hand. In this instance, permitting the opponent to take the first guess, won the game without further effort.

CHAPTER THIRTY

LOCATING A CARD

THE wonderful possibilities that Bridge offers to the thinking person are unequaled by any other card game. Sometimes but one bid is required to definitely locate every important card in a specific hand. When a player has advanced to the stage where he can take advantage of these opportunities, he is in position to enjoy the thrill of accomplishing the seemingly impossible and making the game on a hand in a way that appears little short of miraculous.

In a recent duplicate match, a hand was played that apparently was open to but one line of treatment. At some tables, however, after an opening bid, the opponents inserted an informatory double, that paved the way for play of exceptional brilliancy. Occasionally a double of this kind acts precisely the same as a "business double," and permits a sharp player to locate certain cards and secure the game on a hand that would be impossible without the information given.

	♠ J 9 4	
	♥ A K 9 7 5 3	
	♦ 8	
	♣ 8 5 2	
♠ 6 2	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>	♠ 8 7 5 3
♥ Q 8 4 2		♥ J
♦ K Q 10 6		♦ 9 5 4 3
♣ A Q 10		♣ K 9 6 4
	♠ A K Q 10	
	♥ 10 6	
	♦ A J 7 2	
	♣ J 7 3	

South had the deal and bid a Spade. Where there was no further bidding, the procedure was quite simple. West opened with the King of Diamonds, which was taken by the Ace and a low Diamond ruffed in dummy. If two rounds of Hearts can be made, the cross-ruff will land the game against any defense, as the adverse trumps are all lower than those contained in the hands of Declarant and dummy. The unfortunate distribution of the Heart suit permitted East to trump the second round and lead a trump, which held the contract down to eight tricks. This was the natural and correct play of the deal on the bidding and would land the game in the majority of cases. Where South's Spade bid was doubled informatively by West, a most helpful count of the hand was obtained. North had the option of three things on the double. He could pass, bid two Hearts or two Spades. To pass would doubtless force East to show a minor suit, so

North bid two Spades, with the expectation of showing the Hearts, if he was given another opportunity. There was no further bidding and the King of Diamonds was led as before. The Diamond was returned and ruffed, but when the King of Hearts dropped the Jack, it was time for the Declarant to stop and do a little counting. West had doubled the Spade bid and thereby declared certain high card values which were pretty well marked. He could not hold both the Ace and King of Clubs, or that suit would have been the better opening lead. The Ace of Clubs, however, is marked in his hand, with probably the Queen also, but certainly the Queen of Hearts. The ten of Hearts in South's hand precludes the possibility of a false card by East, so the Declarant is forced to abandon all hopes of making game on a cross-ruff. The first thing of importance is to unblock, by playing the ten of Hearts under the King. Then four rounds of trumps are led and West must take two discards. If he disgorges a Heart, a Small Slam will be made against him—as was actually done at one table. Should he hold all three Hearts, he will be down to three cards in Clubs and Diamonds. The Declarant finesses the Heart, puts him in with the Club and after cashing in his three tricks, he is helpless. It will be noted that even if West has retained two Clubs, an overtake by his partner will not better the situation. The Declarant, by taking full advantage of the information given him has the predominating position after the first card is led.

If there is one factor that counts more towards success at Bridge than perfect play, it is the question of judgment at a critical time in the bidding. A bidder who allows rank obstinacy to sway his judgment, is handicapping himself to such a degree that an even break of the

cards will always find him on the losing side of the ledger. Many players seem to honestly believe that it is "lese Majesty" when their partners persist in bidding minor suits against their No Trumbers. It would be interesting to note how many good players would misbid South's cards on this deal:

	♠ —		
	♥ Q 9 4		
	♦ A 10 8 2		
	♣ K J 9 7 5 3		
♠ J 7 5 4 3 2	NORTH	♠ A K 6	
♥ J 8 6	WEST	♥ 10 7 5 3 2	
♦ 6 4		♦ 9 7 3	
♣ A 8		♣ 4 2	
	SOUTH		
	♠ Q 10 9 8		
	♥ A K		
	♦ K Q J 5		
	♣ Q 10 6		

South dealt and bid a No Trump. West passed and North called two Clubs. South went to two No Trumps and North persisted to three Clubs. While North's re-bid was doubtful strategy, it could hardly be called bad play. Although he holds good No Trump support, the missing Spade suit makes it appear that a slam may be possible, when the partner is strong enough to bid two No Trumps. South, however, bid three No Trumps and all hands passed. I can see little excuse for this last bid. If the game cannot be made at Clubs, then it is almost

sure to be defeated at three No Trumps. The bidding would indicate that game is possible at either make, but if this hypothesis is wrong, the contract at the suit make should be made easily, while at No Trumps, it is extremely doubtful. In the play at No Trumps, South was defeated two tricks. The Spades were opened and cleared. The Declarant could have run to cover with his eight tricks, but played properly in trying to sneak a Club through, before the adversaries discovered that the Hearts and Diamonds were solid. If he had been successful, the game would have been made. West, however, did not hesitate upon the order of saving the game at once by hopping up with the Ace and setting the contract for a hundred points. Played at Clubs, this deal must score twelve tricks for a Small Slam against any opposing defense. To play every hand at its best make is probably the strongest asset of any player.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

PLAYING AGAINST PAR

THERE are many ways of losing a close hand and sometimes, several ways of winning it. When there is but one way in which a hand can be won, that method of play is very often hidden and obscure.

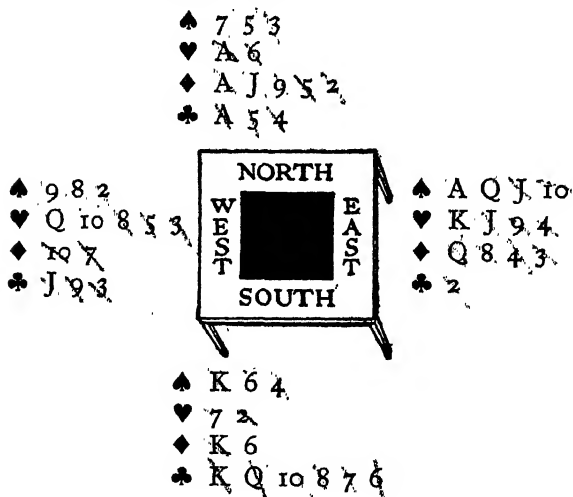
It is really surprising how often players of experience do not recognize situations that crop up time and again, permitting the game to be forced against the best defense of the enemy. When the winning line of play is of such nature that it cannot lose the game, even if the cards lie in the worst possible position, then it unquestionably is a sad calamity to stray from the straight and narrow path of perfect play.

The first thing that the successful player thinks of, after obtaining the contract, is whether or not it is possible to land the game. If the game cannot be won, then fulfilling the contract is of paramount importance. If the average player would only pause a moment to think, he would see how futile it is to play for an extra trick that means but six, or at the most, ten points, when he thereby puts the contract in jeopardy, which means a loss of fifty points in addition to the trick score that could have been made.

As between the choice of winning the game, or having the contract set for a trick, I believe the player should go after the game, if he has at least an even chance. Say the

bid is two No Trumps at a love score. Seven tricks have been taken in and the eighth trick to fulfill the contract is in sight. With absolutely nothing to guide the Declarant, should he attempt a finesse that will make the game if it proves successful, and probably lose the balance of the tricks if it fails? Under such conditions the finesse should usually be taken, because the game is figured as being worth about two hundred points and, therefore, the chances are two hundred against seventy—almost three to one in favor of the Declarant.

When a specific hand can be played in three different ways, two of which will win the game if a certain card lies in a fortunate position and the third will win irrespective of the lay of the cards, then it is self-evident that a sound player has no choice in the matter, always provided that he knows just how to go about playing the hand safely. The play of the hand following illustrates this point to a marked degree:



East had the deal and bid a Spade, which South overcalled with two Clubs. A bit of pushing by the enemy forced South to four Clubs, after his partner had supported the Club bid. While it is apparent that the North-South hands have a sure game at No Trumps, it is hardly possible to play every hand at the best make. The original Spade call by East makes it appear that the deal will play better at a suit make, as in fact it will. The Spade was opened and won by the Ace, South winning the second round with the King. Three rounds of Clubs were taken, followed by the King and six of Diamonds. When the ten was played Second Hand, the Declarant was in a quandary whether or not to finesse the Jack. After a moment's thought, he decided that if West held the Queen, it would fall on the next round, so he went up with the Ace and led back the five.

East played the eight, which South trumped—but the Queen did not fall. The dummy having still one re-entry left, could obtain the lead to set up the long Diamond, but there was no way to get in to make it, so South was compelled to lose a trick in Spades and Hearts, falling one short of winning the game. The partner, as partners are prone to do, publicly expressed his private opinion that South had played like a poor drib. "Why not," he expostulated, "play out five rounds of trumps instead of stopping at three rounds? East will be squeezed and one Diamond discard is sufficient to allow that suit to set and win the game."

While there is much to be said in favor of this method of play, the deal does not hold a true squeeze position. East would be in great distress with his discards, unless his partner came to the rescue. On the fourth round of trumps, West must throw the eight of Hearts to show

that he holds that suit under control. This information permits East to discard the entire Heart suit and keep the four Diamonds intact. If the sixth trump is played, then East can safely shed a Diamond. This would be the proper play to prevent South from sticking him in with the Spade, after the King of Diamonds was played, and forcing a lead up to the Diamond tenace in dummy. With perfect play by the opposition, the game can still be won if the dummy leads the Jack of Diamonds instead of the low Diamond. With the ten falling in the West hand the Jack and nine are equals and if East covers the Jack with the Queen the hand is quite simple. Of course, if East is a first-class player he will refuse to cover, because the remaining Diamonds are all in sight and he cannot promote a Diamond in his hand by putting up the Queen. It must be understood that the only object in "covering an honor with an honor," is to endeavor to make a card of the suit good in either the player's or his partner's hand. When this objective cannot be accomplished, then it is bad play to cover, as nothing can be gained by doing so and there is generally a fair chance that the enemy may guess wrong. In this particular instance South cannot go wrong by passing the Jack of Diamonds, because he holds a losing Spade that can be profitably discarded here. If the Queen of Diamonds happens to be in West's hand, it is true that it will win the trick, but it is the last trick the enemy will take, as the third Spade will be ruffed and the low Heart discarded on the nine of Diamonds. As the cards actually lie, the Declarant scores a Small Slam on the hand. Admitting there is an even chance as to the opponent holding the Queen of Diamonds, a finesse into the East hand, if unsuccessful, must lose the game because

the Spade trick is made at once, while a losing finesse into the West hand still insures the game for the Declarant.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

CHAMPIONSHIP HANDS

THERE is hardly ever a championship match where some outstanding incident or play does not manifest itself in bold relief. At the National championships held at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., a hand was played that was open to many interesting variations of play.

Undoubtedly this deal was the *pièce de résistance* of the second session of play and it had most of the experts gasping for air. Curiously enough, it was not so much a matter of brilliant play, as it was a question of judgment, both on offense and defense, that caused the trouble.

♠ J 10
♥ K Q 9 8 4 2
♦ Q 7 5 3
♣ 10

♠ 6 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E S T SOUTH </div>	♠ A 7 4
♥ A J 6		♥ 7 5 3
♦ A K 9 6		♦ J 10 8 2
♣ Q 9 8 3		♣ K J 6

♠ K Q 9 8 5 2
♥ 10
♦ 4
♣ A 7 5 4 2

There seemed to be no difficulty with the bidding. South dealt and bid a Spade, which West doubled, North passed and East called a No Trump. South went to two Spades and all hands passed. After the opening lead of the King of Diamonds held the first trick, West found the going hard and thorny. At only one table did West make the proper continuance! The lead for the second trick that was most favored was the three of Clubs. This threw the burden of the best procedure upon the Declarant and while he cannot force the game against perfect defense even at this point, he can make it so difficult for the adversaries that the closest card-reading is required or the game will be lost. In every instance but one where South obtained the lead on the second trick, either by ruffing the Diamond or by the Ace of Clubs, he at once went after the cross-ruff. It is apparent that the game is impossible on this line of play, as one Club must be lost at the end and one trick in each of the other suits must go to the enemy. South's only play that gives the adversary an opportunity to make an error, is the ten of Hearts. West wins with the Ace and if he leads anything but the trump, the Declarant must win the game. If West leads the trump and East plays the second round, North must win with the Jack and two Club discards are obtained on the Hearts, which is just as good as if these two Clubs were ruffed. Of course, West's proper play at the second trick should be the trump. Even if a Spade trick is sacrificed to the enemy, it will be more than made up by the saving of the Club suit. As a matter of fact, the trump lead at the second trick will defeat the contract instead of losing the game as the Declarant must lose three Club tricks and one trick in each of the other suits. Although East's No Trump bid was forced by the partner's double,

tract. The Jack of Diamonds was opened and won by the Declarant with the Queen. Not finding it easy to get the dummy in for the trump finesse, South led the Jack of Spades, which East won with the Ace and returned the Diamond. West trumped and now led the Club, East trumping and leading another Diamond. The Declarant apparently thought this foolishness had gone far enough, for he ruffed in with the ten, shutting West out, and followed with the Ace and Queen of Hearts. East won the second Heart trick and returned the Spade, the Declarant losing two Spade tricks at the finish. It hardly seems possible that with this wonderful aggregation of high cards, the contract of two Hearts was actually defeated for a trick. If the Declarant had paused a moment before he played to the first trick, he would have seen the necessity of obtaining the immediate lead in the dummy. The Ace of Diamonds was the correct play, even though it fells the high card in his hand, and the nine of Hearts led and finessed. After the trumps are picked up, the Queen of Clubs must be overtaken in the dummy and the two high Clubs afford discards of two losing Spades, the opponents being held down to only one trick, the Ace of Spades. Instead of having the contract defeated, a Small Slam will be scored. To obtain the trump finesse it is obvious that either the high Diamond or Club must be overtaken in dummy and there is no good reason why this play should be delayed. That the Declarant could have done better, after his ten of trumps shut out West is self-evident, but doubtless he was so disgusted with himself that he was not in his best mood for sober thought.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

TO THE RESCUE!

THERE can be but little chance for success, either at business or at cards, when partners do not have confidence and trust in each other. That the partner is always wrong and the opposition right is the frame of mind that appears to prevail with a large number of players. A palpable false-card by the enemy is permitted to sway the trend of play into the wrong channels, while proper play of the partner is entirely ignored. At times good players deliberately redouble hands that are unquestionably doomed to defeat, in the hope that the panic-stricken partner of the doubler will be ready with the rescue—and he generally is. A few of the most flagrant instances of “scaredicatitnss,” are shown in the hands following:

♠ —
 ♥ K J 9 7 6 4 3
 ♦ K J 5
 ♣ 10 8 7

♠ A 9 6 3
 ♥ A 10
 ♦ Q 9 6
 ♣ A K J 2

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ 5 4
 ♥ Q 8 5 2
 ♦ 10 8 4 2
 ♣ Q 6 5

♠ K Q J 10 8 7 2
 ♥ —
 ♦ A 7 3
 ♣ 9 4 3

On this deal, West bid a No Trump, which North and East passed. South bid three Spades and West doubled. Whether or not this double was an informatory one, North did not wait to find out, but on the supposition that his partner was a geck, he bid four Hearts. This East doubled and South showed good judgment in going to four Spades. West again doubled and defeated the hand one trick, less 80 honors. Of course, the original double, if permitted to stand, would have landed the game without difficulty, as the Diamond finesse is marked against West. If East had treated the double as negative and bid four Hearts, then a fine trimming was in store for Messrs. East and West. I can see no rhyme or reason in North's mad leap to the rescue. South has made a preemptive bid and does not ask that his partner have trump support. All the high card assistance that could

be hoped for in suit, is in North's hand and he should not have hesitated upon the order of passing. If South had bid two Spades instead of three, then North would have been quite correct in bidding three Hearts, because in that case the bid might properly be considered a bid for a lead, where a little trump support is expected.

A hand where the "partner must be wrong spirit," cost about 600 points was played at the Lake Placid Club.

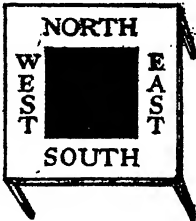
		♠ 3		
		♥ J 8 2		
		♦ J 10 8 7 6 4		
		♣ 9 7 5		
♠ 8 7 5 2				♠ A Q 10 6
♥ 9 4 3				♥ A 7 5
♦ 5 3				♦ K 9 2
♣ 8 4 3 2				♣ A J 10
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>			
		♠ K J 9 4		
		♥ K Q 10 6		
		♦ A Q		
		♣ K Q 6		

North had the deal and passed, East bid a No Trump, which South doubled. West passed and North went to two Diamonds. This was doubled negatively by East and the hoped for Spade bid was West's response. To this point the bidding was conventional and hardly open to criticism. North certainly strained a point in continuing

to three Diamonds, but East went on to three Spades which was doubled by South. West passed and now North viewed with dismay the result of his misdeeds. He hadn't the resemblance of a trick in support of his partner's double, although his second Diamond bid was made voluntarily. It is really curious how difficult it becomes to reason correctly when a player has already made one error. The endeavor to escape with four Diamonds, resulted in a double, which set the contract one trick. If the partner's Spade double had not been interfered with, the penalty would have been four or five hundred points. In analyzing the bidding, it should be noted that South's original double showed strength in the Major suits, especially Spades; that West had refused to bid until forced to by his partner; that South at no time had supported the Diamond bid; that South was fully aware that a double of three Spades at a love score was bad business, unless his hand was unusually powerful. And, finally, that North had passed originally and little could be expected from him in the way of quick tricks. The summary should tend to show that the Spade contract would be defeated—possibly a trick less than expected—while the Diamond bid had little chance to produce a game, and might be heavily set.

To the Bridger's invocation may be appended: "And save me from my rescuers."

Trusting the partner in the play of the cards, is fully as important as in the bidding. It should always be borne in mind that the partner is at least trying his best to point out the best course to pursue, while the adversary is endeavoring to obscure the issue.

	♠ K 10 8	
	♥ J 8 6	
	♦ K J 10 7	
	♣ J 10 7	
♠ Q		♠ A 9 7 6 4
♥ 7 4 3		♥ 2
♦ A 6 4 2		♦ 8 5 3
♣ A 9 8 4 2		♣ K Q 6 3
	♠ J 5 3 2	
	♥ A K Q 10 9 5	
	♦ Q 9	
	♣ 5	

East dealt and bid a Spade, which South overcalled with three Hearts. There was no further bidding and the Queen of Spades was led, covered by the King and won by the Ace. The Declarant could easily mark the Queen as being a singleton and knowing the game could not be won if West was given a ruff, he played the Jack of Spades under the Ace. This play gave East a minor tenace position in the suit and he switched to the King of Clubs. West played the two and East continued with a low Club. The Declarant ruffed, dragged down the trumps and set up the Diamonds in dummy, upon which he discarded the two losing Spades, making ten tricks and game. That the play of the Jack of Spades is a palpable false-card should be apparent. If it were the only Spade in South's hand, then West would have held four cards in the suit and his proper opening lead should

have been a low card instead of the Queen. On the second lead, West played the two of Clubs on his partner's King, although he is marked with the Ace. If South held the Ace, a hold-up would be atrocious with the Jack-ten in the dummy. East's play of the lowest Club can mean but one thing—he is imploring for a Spade return, and a chance to save the game. If East had returned the Spade at once on the presumption that it was the best play, if only because the Declarant was so desperately trying to frighten him off, his partner would have ruffed and led a *low* Club. East is positively marked with the King of Clubs on his original bid. Holding but one quick trick in his bid suit, his second trick must be in Clubs, when the Heart suit is shown with South. On the low Club lead, West obtains a second Spade ruff and the Heart contract is defeated for a trick instead of losing the game.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

COUNTING THE LOSERS

MUCH has been said and written as to the advisability of stopping to count the losing cards in a hand when a player is in the throes of a bidding spree. With sound bidding by the partners, the trick taking value of the combined hands should be approximated within a trick or two and the five and six hundred point penalties that so often disgrace the score-sheet are usually the perfectly natural result of trying to obtain the play of every deal. I venture to say that in every coterie of bridge-players there is always at least one who is never at a loss for a bid of some sort. Adversary or partner, it makes no difference to him. He considers that deal null, void and completely lost, when he cannot insert a bid, if only to call attention to the important fact that he is still in the game. There are still extant, players of the old school who will make original bids without holding the two "quick-tricks," that the modern game is based upon. To properly count a hand, with such a factor in the game, is almost impossible and the difference between being set for five hundred points and passing up a game hand is very much a matter of guess-work.

An excellent time to stop and count is when the contract has been secured and the dummy hand is laid on the table. Often, it is at once apparent that the game cannot be won. When this is the case, the player should be most careful to fulfill his contract, if possible. Playing a

one Spade contract at a love score, it is very bad tactics to have the contract defeated because the player tried to make eight tricks. Fifty-nine to nine are bad odds on an even proposition and no player can afford to accept them, although countless bridge-players actually do, day after day. When there is a chance to win the game or rubber, with a reward of two hundred or four hundred points against fifty, then it is an entirely different matter. Now the percentage favors the speculation. This answers the numerous inquirers who wish to know whether it is good play to jeopardize the contract in an endeavor to win the game.

When a hand contains a number of sure losers and some probable losers, then upon the ability to figure which are the "least probable," usually hinges the success or failure of that deal. It is curious how often players think they are taking an even chance, when the odds are two to one against them—and worse.

♠ 6 5
 ♥ A J 9 8 6
 ♦ Q 10 4 2
 ♣ A 8

♠ Q 7 2
 ♥ K Q 10 5
 ♦ 5 3
 ♣ K Q 4 3



♠ 9 3
 ♥ 7 4
 ♦ A 9 8 7
 ♣ J 10 9 6 2

♠ A K J 10 8 4
 ♥ 3 2
 ♦ K J 6
 ♣ 7 5

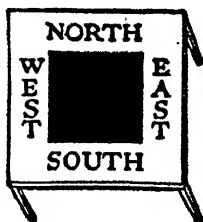
South dealt and preëmpted with three Spades, which bought the contract. West opened the King of Hearts and the Declarant permitted the King to hold. West at once switched to the King of Clubs, which was won by the Ace in dummy and the trump finesse lost to the Queen. The Declarant succeeded in making his contract of three Spades, but did he take advantage of the maximum opportunity that the hand afforded? His refusal to win the first trick was predicated on the hope that the Queen of Spades was with East—in which case he would make eleven tricks—or, that West would not shift to the Club suit. His sure losers consisted of one trick in Hearts and Diamonds and possible losers in Spades and Clubs. The Spade finesse was at least as good as an even chance. Close thought will show that the Declarant has much better than an even chance to win this game. Chancing everything on the location of the Queen of Spades is too much like putting all the eggs in one basket. The game can be won, provided the Spade suit is divided three and two, irrespective of whether East or West holds the Queen. The added chance that the Queen is alone, or singly guarded, is also in the Declarant's favor. The important thing is to prevent a Club trick from making and the Ace of Hearts should have taken at once, then two rounds of Spades played without attempting the finesse. If the Queen does not fall, then the Heart should be led to establish the Jack in dummy, and the enemy can make their top trump when they wish, but the losing Club is discarded on the Jack of Hearts. One trick each in Spades, Hearts and Diamonds to the enemy, will not prevent Declarant from landing the game. It will be noted that the game could be won, even after the hold-up of the Ace of Hearts, if the trump finesse is not taken. After

two rounds of trumps, the Heart is put through and the Club discard is secured.

Sometimes a deal seems to count more losers than the traffic will bear, unless one specific card is in a certain hand. When this is the case, the play should be, as though the card was known to be in the desired place.

♠ 5 2
♥ 9 6 5
♦ Q 4 3
♣ A J 8 6 2

♠ A J 10 7 6 3
♥ A Q 8 2
♦ K
♣ 10 3



♠ Q 9 8
 ♥ K J 4 3
 ♦ J 6
 ♣ Q 9 5 4

♠ K 4
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ A 10 9 8 7 5 2
 ♣ K 7

South secured the contract for five Diamonds, the adversaries having gone to four Spades. The Ace of Spades was opened and a second round was won by the King. In a desperate endeavor to get rid of the losing Hearts, the Declarant played the King of Clubs and followed with another round, finessing the Jack in dummy. At the finish, the contract was set for three tricks, which fortunately for the Declarant, had not been doubled. That a successful Club finesse will not, in itself, succeed in making the contract should be obvious. The Declarant has

been favored by Providence in getting a Spade opening instead of a Heart and should take advantage of his good fortune by accepting the only chance open to him. The contract, not having been doubled, would tend strongly to prove that the three missing trumps cannot be in one hand. If that is the case, why cannot the singleton Diamond be the King? Played on that premise, the game is in sight. When the King falls, even then the play must be very careful. If the Clubs are evenly divided, then the hand is over, but in the exigency of four Clubs being in one hand, two trump reëntries must be kept in dummy. The Club should not be finessed but the third round ruffed with the five of trumps. Now the ten of trumps is overtaken with the Queen and the fourth Club ruffed with the seven of trumps. The object of keeping the two of trumps now appears. Dummy is able to enter with the three and afford a needed Heart discard for the fulfillment of the contract.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

TECHNIQUE

IT is quite true that but comparatively few of the great number of Bridge players in the country have played Duplicate Bridge. I refer to that style of play so often in this book, because it illustrates the actual play of a deal, dealt at random and played at a dozen or more tables by different players, who are usually affiliated with a card club where the standard of play is supposed to be rather better than the average. It should be understood that the bidding and play of the cards are in no way different than in regular, straight Auction Bridge as it is played everywhere. At present there are three Bridge clubs in New York City, where the duplicate form of game is played once or twice a week and it seems to be increasing in popularity all the time. On evenings when the run of the cards is peculiar and freakish, the differences in the scores are very great. When the hands are more normal the scores are apt to be quite even. Often, after three or four hours play, there are less than fifty points separating the first three pairs of players and I have at times, seen the top score actually tied. There are always a few outstanding hands that cause the big swings in the scores and the after-game discussion of these deals is generally instructive as well as interesting. To many of the players, large losses seem to be entirely the result of bad bidding. I believe that bad play

will lose just as much as bad bidding, but, of course, the initial error is in the bidding—because the bidding comes first. Really these two integral parts of the game are so intertwined that it is useless to try and separate them.

A deal played at the Knickerbocker Whist Club recently, appeared to be a rather simple affair. The variation in bidding and play—and score—was most pronounced.

		♠ Q J 10 7 2	
		♥ 3	
		♦ 10 5 2	
		♣ J 9 6 3	
♠ A 6 5 3			♠ K 9 8
♥ 9 8 7 4			♥ 5
♦ 6			♦ A K Q 9 8 4
♣ Q 10 4 2			♣ A K 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WEST</div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl;">EAST</div> </div> SOUTH </div>		
		♠ 4	
		♥ A K Q J 10 6 2	
		♦ J 7 3	
		♣ 8 7	

North had the deal and passed. East at some tables bid a No Trump. That such a bid is thoroughly unsound is now conceded by most of the experts. Holding a low singleton and a good suit bid, the No Trump may be worked into, but the suit bid should be started. South, after a No Trump, should pass, but some players find it far easier to pass through a needle's eye than five honors in Hearts. Other players think it is unethical to

pass a set-up suit. Even a rattlesnake rattles to warn its victim! The enemy who refuses to bid soundly, must be told that the leader has a solid suit so that he can find a bid that will win the game for his side. If the No Trump bid is left in, the contract must be defeated for one trick, and if the Hearts are shown, East will be driven to his Diamonds, forcing South to bid his Hearts probably up to four. This contract should be doubled and defeated three hundred points, a sad reward for the Samaritan bid.

When the proper bid of a Diamond was made, South bid the Hearts, which at once put the quietus on all thoughts of a No Trump. It was better not to preempt the Heart bid, as a suit had been already shown. Whether East doubled the Hearts when South got too high, or went to five Diamonds, the deal worked out well for him. While it appears that five-odd is all that can be made on the hand, a Small Slam is there on the squeeze play if the enemy is not ready with a coup. If East trumps the second round of Hearts and plays out all the trumps, North will be left with six cards. To guard both the Spades and Clubs under these conditions would be an impossibility. On the discards dummy must keep the four Clubs, while the Declarant has the three Spades.

As played at my table, this hand developed some very interesting situations. East properly started with a Diamond and I, at the South position, bid a Heart. West passed but North, fearing the Heart bid would be left in, rescued with a Spade. From that point the bidding went merrily on until East bid five Diamonds. On the strength of North's deceitful Spade bid, I doubled the five Diamonds, a somewhat doubtful procedure, notwithstanding it was a free double.

I opened the King of Hearts and when the dummy went down with four Hearts and the Ace of Spades, it looked like Black Friday, the 13th. There was still one chance left—that my partner held an honor in Diamonds and would trump my Ace of Hearts. I was quite certain he would do so, but kept my powder dry by leading the two of Hearts. The ten of Diamonds went on this lead and East won with the Queen. When the Club suit obstinately refused to break and afford the Declarant a discard of his losing Spade, the contract was defeated one trick, a Diamond, Heart and Spade being lost. If East had played perfectly, even the difficult defense he was compelled to contend with, should not have prevented him from making his contract. When the second round of Hearts is trumped with the ten of Diamonds, it should have been apparent to him that if he overtrumps, a Diamond trick will almost surely go against him. South's only object in leading a losing Heart, when holding all the top honors, would be to force a trump from the partner that might establish a trump in South's hand. The Declarant's best play would have been to refuse to over-trump with the Queen, but permit the ten of trumps to hold and take a discard of the losing Spade. Even when this play was not recognized in time, there was yet another way to make eleven tricks. The same old squeeze that would have made a Small Slam on primary play, would have still made the game at this stage. South should have been put in with the third round of trumps and, on regaining the lead, the Declarant by playing his remaining trumps, forces North to unguard one of the two suits he has left.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

THE GAME OR THE BLOW

IT is not very difficult to follow the trend of mind of the Bridge player who handles the cards with exceptional cleverness and, therefore, bids freely and abundantly. If the enemy cannot be inveigled into over-bidding their hands, or coerced into losing a trick in play, at least the skilful player feels that he can play the cards for all they are worth and secure the maximum number of tricks that can possibly be made. The unfathomable mystery is, why the player who can, without undue effort, manage to lose one or two tricks per hand, usually far outbids all competitors. We have all seen the player who frankly admits that they "don't know how to play the hand," bid a No Trump on an Ace, a hunch and a hope and then complain bitterly when the contract is set for five or six tricks. The only plausible explanation I can see is the fear of an inferiority complex and the thought that free bidding may tend to disguise other shortcomings. There is no law or rule that compels a player to bid on what experts call the "minimum requirements," and it would doubtless work out advantageously if players of immature experience recognized their limitations and hesitated about setting themselves too difficult a task. Quite often an indifferent player will lose the game by bidding a weak No Trump that takes the play from a partner of good ability, who might have won the game easily.

When the average player holds a hand more or less

“solid,” with Aces and Kings predominating, it usually does not involve as difficult play as when the strength of the hand lies mainly in the length of the trump suit. Unless the player is of the advanced type, it is generally more profitable to permit the opponents to play the deal when the bidding gets too high on the latter style of hands. It is a bit irritating to hear an adversary say after he has been set for a trick or two: “Well, partner, we saved the game,” but more often than not, such a statement is based on double-dummy play. In actual play the hand might have been defeated if played by the opposing side, either through imperfect play or an unfortunate “guess.” If, on the following hand, the East player had had the play of the deal at four Clubs, he should have been defeated two tricks. South played the hand and was actually defeated four hundred points—partly through his bad play—but who can gainsay that he could not have made the game, even against the perfect defense of the enemy?

	♠ K 4 3		
	♥ Q 8 6 3		
	♦ 9 5 2		
	♣ A 6 2		
♠ Q 9			♠ 7 5
♥ 10 9 5 4			♥ K 7 2
♦ A J 7 6 4			♦ K Q
♣ 9 8			♣ K Q J 10 7 3
	<div data-bbox="388 1028 623 1270"> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
	♠ A J 10 8 6 2		
	♥ A J		
	♦ 10 8 3		
	♣ 5 4		

East had the deal and bid a Club, South bid a Spade, West two Diamonds and North two Spades. On the second round, East went to three Clubs, South three Spades, West and North passing. East persisted to four Clubs, which was passed by South and West, but North continued to four Spades, which was doubled by East. All hands passed and West led the nine of Clubs. Dummy won with the Ace and played the King of Spades, followed by the four. South, evidently influenced by East's double, finessed the ten and West won with the Queen. The eight of Clubs was overtaken by East and another Club led, which was permitted to hold when the Declarant discarded a Diamond. East then switched to the King of Diamonds and followed with the Queen, which West won with the Ace. The Jack of Diamonds was ruffed by South and, as he could not obtain the lead in dummy to finesse the Heart, a trick in that suit also went astray. Of course, a trick was thrown away by South's refusal to trump the third Club. By ruffing and leading a Diamond, he forces either a Heart lead, or a ruff and discard. The Declarant's grievance, however, was not so much with his lost trick as it was with his partner, for taking him to four Spades. Holding a split hand with no ability to ruff, the Declarant felt that his partner hardly had one sound raise—certainly not two. North differed with his partner's view of the situation—as partners occasionally do—and contended that if the hand had been properly played, they need be set but one trick instead of four. When dummy is in with the Ace of Clubs, the Heart finesse, instead of the Spade, will accomplish this result. Under expert treatment, the game can and should be made. East's double, with the Spade bidder over him, does not mark him with the Queen. If West, at the left of

the bidder, had doubled, then the Queen might be marked in that hand. East's double, however, does locate the King of Hearts with him and that finesse is the more important and should be taken at once. A low Heart should be led and the Jack played by South. When the Jack wins, the chance for game cannot be disregarded. If East holds three Hearts and the trumps are divided, careful play must win the game. The Ace of Hearts is played next, then the Ace of Spades and the Jack of Spades. The dummy is in with the King and the eight of Hearts will force out the King, which should be ruffed by a high trump so that the lowly deuce can be led to permit dummy to regain the lead with the four and the losing Club is discarded on the good Queen of Hearts. The Declarant cannot escape losing the three Diamond tricks at the end, but the difference between going down four hundred points and scoring the doubled game and rubber is very likely to be the difference between a losing and a winning session at the Bridge table.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

QUICK ON THE TRIGGER

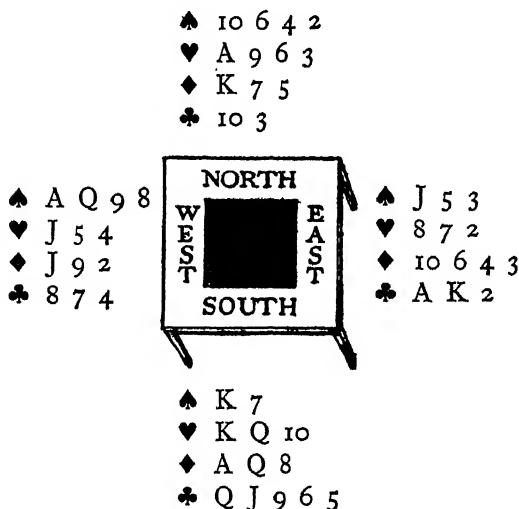
MANY tricks and games are lost by slow-thinking players, who cannot seem to break themselves of the very bad habit of hesitating when an honor is led through them. Often the declarant can take a finesse either in his hand or in the dummy and the opponents hesitation is the only clue to guide him into the proper channel. It is admittedly bad form to hesitate when the player does not hold the missing honor and any member of a card club who believes such tactics to be smart play, quickly finds himself in bad repute at his Club. When defending a hand against the Declarant, players should anticipate leads of this kind and be prepared to cover or not, before the play comes up. If taken unawares, it is usually better to play quickly, even if the card played should prove the incorrect one. When the adversary is compelled to do the guessing, he is quite likely to err occasionally.

Another variation of hesitation play that defeats its purpose, is when the player holds up an Ace or a King. Played in the usual, natural way, such play may be successful, while nothing can be gained by waiting a minute or two to consider the matter. Quite recently a rather neat coup was instrumental in permitting a player to escape from a desperate situation, but I hardly believe

the hand was actually played, the Declarant was quick to take advantage of the opponent's hesitancy, and while the contract could not have been made against double-dummy defense, it was almost a sure thing that the line of play mapped out by the Declarant would prove successful in the vast majority of instances. On the lead of the King of Clubs, East pondered a moment as to the advisability of echoing by playing the eight of Clubs before the seven. If West held five or six Clubs, the echo would be useless and the immediate lead of a Diamond might save the game. Of course, East's correct play was the eight first, as West was the proper person to decide whether a third round of Clubs should be played, or the switch made to Diamonds. With a five-card Club suit, West could not help reading the situation correctly. East eventually arrived at this conclusion and played the eight, completing the echo on the second round. The moment's hesitancy would have been quite harmless if the Declarant had not risen to the occasion, by playing the Queen of Clubs under the Ace on the second round. This play appears, at first thought, like sheer idiocy, as the Queen is the ranking card on the third round. East's signal, however, makes it apparent that the suit will be continued and the Queen ruffed, unless West can be induced to switch. When the Queen falls, West's Jack becomes high and he is forced to infer that his partner holds another Club. To West now, the hesitation of his partner on the first lead is explained by his distaste to playing the missing two on the first trick—this innocuous appearing card being still held up by South. To play his Jack and have it trumped by the Declarant, setting up the ten in dummy, seems out of the question, so the Diamond is led through with disastrous results. The Declarant ruffs, draws all

the opposing trumps and then leads the two of Clubs through, setting up the ten in dummy to afford a discard for the losing Heart. It should be noted that if West had played exceptionally well and continued on with the Clubs, even to the fourth round that would have been necessary to save the game, he would assuredly have played the third round if the Queen had not fallen, so that the play of the Declarant had everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Many rubbers are lost at Bridge where the simplest inference, coupled with just a bit of "book-learning," would have been sufficient to have saved the game.



South's one No Trump bought the contact and the eight of Spades was the opening lead. North played the two, East the Jack and South won with the King. The Declarant immediately went after the Clubs and the en-

emy succeeded in taking in but four tricks, two each in Spades and Clubs. The hand seemed to be a pianola—self-playing—but correct play by East must save the game.

On the eleven rule, but three cards can beat the card led on the opening lead. One, the ten, is in the dummy and another, the Jack, is held by East, so only one card higher than the eight can be in the Declarant's hand. That this card must be either the Ace, King or Queen is a certainty, as the leader would not lead a low card if he held the Ace-King-Queen combination. By refusing to put up the Jack on the first round of Spades, an extra trick is made in that suit and the game must be saved.

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

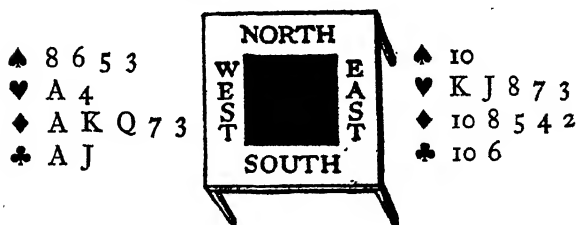
DELICATE PLAY

WHEN a hand contains seven or more cards of one suit, or eleven cards divided in two suits, it is called a "freak," and usually should not be treated along strictly conventional lines, either in bidding or in play. To make a preëmptive bid on a freak two-suiter is poor strategy, because the distribution in one or more of the other hands is almost sure to be abnormal. Very often the game can be won by showing the weaker of two suits, when the far stronger combination would be defeated. Holding a two suiter, with one exceptionally strong suit, it may be expedient to rebid this suit before showing the other, if the opportunity offers, so that the partner will not be misled into thinking that both suits are about equal. If my partner bid one Spade, two Spades and three Hearts, over the opponent's minor suit showing, I would figure the hand as composed of about six Spades to the Ace-King and five Hearts to the Queen. With four Hearts to the King, two small Spades and an otherwise worthless hand, one and under some conditions, two raises in Hearts would not be unjustified strategic bidding. If the contract is defeated, it is quite likely that the opponents have a game hand, if played at their minor suit.

When a hand holds great length in a minor suit with a four-card major and two suits unprotected, it is some-

what dangerous to start the bidding on the four-card major suit. One force and the hand may be utterly ruined. When a major suit is bid after the player has started with a minor, the partner cannot go amiss. The second suit lacks either top cards, or length. To support the secondary bid with less than four of the suit is rarely good play. Even with four cards, it generally requires delicate play to land the game, as the hand following will show:

♠ J 9 7 4
♥ Q 9 6 5 2
♦ J 9
♣ 8 3



♠ A K Q 2
♥ 10
♦ 6
♣ K Q 9 7 5 4 2

After East had passed, South bid a Club, the two singletons being a strong factor against showing the four-card Spade suit. West bid a Diamond, North and East passed and South now called the Spade. West bid two Diamonds, North passed and East went to two Hearts. Holding five cards of his partner's suit, it may appear that East is rather indiscreet when he bids the Hearts, but the bid is sound nevertheless. Having passed the

Diamond bid on the first round, thereby showing at least normal support in the suit, East must endeavor to better the contract, if he can do so without misleading his partner. The Heart bid in this position indicates a willingness to have the partner go on with the Diamonds, if he cannot help the Hearts. It is neat bidding. South bid three Clubs and West went to three Diamonds. West reasons well in refusing to support the belated Heart bid. The partner, not having shown the suit on the first two rounds of bidding, and South showing length in Spades and Clubs, marks North with strength in Hearts. The Diamond bid is passed up to South, who goes to four Clubs. It will be noted that the four-card suit is not rebid. Unless the partner has a strong preference for the Spades, South must continue bidding his long suit for all the hand is worth. West passes and now North is forced for the first time to make a choice. While he has not a sound assist at any time, he has a decided choice and bids four Spades. East and South passing, West doubles and the hand is played at this make.

This deal was played in a team match and both teams agreed upon the bidding, South playing the hand at four Spades doubled. On the play, however, a swing of 650 points was recorded. At the first table, West led two rounds of Diamonds, the Declarant ruffing the second round and taking two rounds of trumps. Finding four trumps with West, he led the King of Clubs, which West took with the Ace and returned a trump. South could do nothing but continue the Clubs, West ruffing the third round and being overruffed by dummy. The balance of the tricks were taken by the enemy, setting the contract four hundred points. If the Declarant had taken but one round of trumps, he would have saved a trick, as West

would have been forced to switch to the Hearts, instead of leading the trumps, when he was in with the Ace of Clubs. At the second table, the opening was identical, but the second round of Diamonds was trumped with the Queen instead of the low trump. The Declarant can see nothing but defeat if dummy cannot get in to pull down the trumps. It is obvious that a force in Hearts is coming next and that is the time to decide whether to ruff with the high or low trump. After one round of trumps is played, the drop of the ten from East marks the location of the balance with West. With probable ability to over-ruff dummy in Clubs, East could hardly afford to false-card the ten, if he held other trumps. South, after one round of trumps, leads the King of Clubs and West wins and leads the Ace and four of Hearts. South trumps the second round with the Ace of trumps, leads the two and the finesse of the seven permits dummy to gather in all the opposing trumps and make the entire Club suit, losing only three tricks and fulfilling the doubled contract.

A hand where the game was saved by clever defense against correct play was played by J. P. Mattheys at the Knickerbocker Whist Club:

		♠ A J 7	
		♥ 6 5	
		♦ 8 5 4	
		♣ A J 10 8 4	
♠ Q 8 4 2			♠ K 10 3
♥ J 9 4			♥ Q 10 8 2
♦ Q 10 2			♦ J 7 3
♣ K 9 7			♣ Q 6 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>WEST EAST</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>		
		♠ 9 6 5	
		♥ A K 7 3	
		♦ A K 9 6	
		♣ 5 2	

West dealt and passed, North bid a Club and South won the contract for a No Trump. The two of Spades was opened and Mr. Mattheys, in the East position, finessed the ten, returned the King, and being permitted to hold that trick, led the third round, drawing out the Ace. The Declarant got in with the King of Diamonds and finessed the ten of Clubs. The ten held, as the Queen was not played, with the result that the Declarant could not take more than eight tricks. The hold-up of the Queen of Clubs is very pretty play, as the King is marked with partner and the finesse of the Jack on the second round will win the game if the Queen goes up. If South held the King of Clubs, it would have been safer play, instead of disclosing the Diamond situation, to put his hand in with the Club King and take the finesse on the second round of the suit.

■

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

NO LAW AGAINST TRYING

EVERY Club and community has its Bridge player who is known as the "Lucky-player" or the "Big-holder." Curiously enough, these individuals are rarely given credit for possessing exceptional ability at the card table. The general opinion seems to be that they are "pretty fair players, but they always hold phenomenal cards." As I have repeatedly declared myself, my firm opinion is that the cards will average up in the long run. After, say, a hundred sessions of play, I believe the difference in the number of Aces, Kings and Queens held by the "tremendous-holder" and the "terrible-holder" will be rather less than the percentage of alcohol in a chocolate ice-cream-soda with vanilla cream. It is fair to assume that a Bridge player of outstanding ability will sooner or later be accredited and honored with a niche in the Hall of Bridge-fame, so there is doubtless something else that the "lucky-holder" has, that tends to make him a winner. Few of us can be the seventh son of a seventh son and charm-philters have not been in vogue since Cagliostro gave up the ghost.

That a certain class of players do win continually, notwithstanding that they lose many tricks by careless and unsound play, is an established fact. The only reason I can see is, that these players use excellent judgment at critical times. When they are heavily set, the enemy would

have won the rubber had they obtained the contract. While they lose the difficult Grand Coups and squeezes, they win many games by apparently simple plays that the other fellow never thinks of. There is a colossal difference between permitting the adversaries to score a slam on the rubber game or overbidding the hand with the expectation of taking a penalty and then succeeding in fulfilling the doubled contract.

A hand that appeared absolutely hopeless and yet was "put over" by a touch of psychology was the following:

		♠ A J 8 3	
		♥ 10 7 2	
		♦ 8 6 4	
		♣ Q 9 5	
♠ 4 2			♠ 6
♥ A K 8 3			♥ Q J 9 6 5 4
♦ Q 3 2			♦ A K J 9 5
♣ 8 6 4 3			♣ A
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K Q 10 9 7 5	
		♥ —	
		♦ 10 7	
		♣ K J 10 7 2	

On the rubber game East dealt and bid a Heart, South a Spade, West two Hearts and North passed. South rebid the Spades, West and North passed and East went to three Diamonds. South now bid four Clubs, with the knowledge that his partner would go back to Spades, unless he held exceptional support in the Clubs, because the Spades had been rebid before the Clubs were shown at

all. This is a phase of bidding that should be given close study. When a two-suiter is bid, if one suit is much stronger than the other, it should be rebid if possible, so that the partner will not be deceived into believing that the suits are about equal. This is especially so when the first suit is a Major and the second a Minor, because a Major is usually bid before a stronger Minor, provided the bidding values are there. West helped his partner to four Hearts and North, on the two-suit showing, went to four Spades. East properly bid five Hearts, but South persisted to five Spades. That the game at Hearts was a surety, decided South into taking the chance to be set for a trick or two. As a matter of fact, East must make a Small Slam if the deal is played at Hearts. The five Spade bid was doubled by East and the opening lead was the King of Hearts. It hardly seemed possible to avoid losing a Club and two Diamonds, and being penalized for a hundred points, but South tried a play that appears foolish when the cards are exposed and yet was the only chance to confuse the issue and actually did succeed in winning the game. After trumping the Heart, South played two rounds of trumps, leaving dummy in the lead. A Club play would compel the enemy to run with the two Diamonds, so a low Diamond was played, East winning with the King. Another Heart was led and ruffed and now South led the ten of Clubs, putting up the Queen in dummy. East, of course, had to win with the Ace and, thinking his partner had a trick in Clubs which would not make if dummy obtained a discard on the mythical Diamond that the Declarant seemed to be trying to establish, a third round of Hearts was played and from then on, nothing mattered. Dummy's two remaining Diamonds were shed on the two good Clubs and if the

game was lost by East's bad play, South should at least be entitled to credit for "aiding and abetting."

That a lost trick means practically nothing, unless it makes the difference in the game or contract, is of not sufficient significance to many players. When a contract is played at one No Trump, with no score, making an extra trick is worth exactly ten points, while two extra is a matter of from two to five hundred.

		♠ K Q 8	
		♥ 10 6 5	
		♦ J 10 7 4	
		♣ K J 2	
♠ 9 3			♠ 6 4
♥ A K Q J 7			♥ 9 4
♦ Q 8 6 5			♦ A 3 2
♣ 9 4			♣ 10 8 7 6 5 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E S T S O U T SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A J 10 7 5 2	
		♥ 8 3 2	
		♦ K 9	
		♣ A Q	

At a love score South obtained the contract for two Spades after West had bid and rebid the Hearts. Three rounds of Hearts were cashed in and West then switched to the nine of Clubs, which South won with the Ace. The obvious play is to take out the opposing trumps, after which a Diamond can be discarded on the third Club in dummy. Then the Diamond is led and unless East is a moron, the Ace will clatter up and catch the lone King.

The way the hand was played, gave the enemy a chance to slip. The discard was not taken after the Club lead, but dummy was put in with the Queen of Spades and the Jack of Diamonds was led at once. At this early stage, East did not see the danger signal and the Ace was not played. The Declarant went up with the King, and after drawing the trumps, discarded the nine of Diamonds on the good Club. If the Ace had been with West and the Diamond had been immediately returned, South would have lost a trick—nine points. That East should unquestionably have played the Ace anyway, does not alter the fact that it often pays to try.

■

CHAPTER FORTY

A CAMOUFLAGE DOUBLE

FASHIONS change with the times and to keep in vogue, whether the subject be dress or Auction Bridge, one must be prepared to accept or discard a style or convention as soon as it is regarded by the great majority as being the proper thing. When the informatory double was started in this country a considerable number of excellent players refused to use it—some because they believed it was unfair, others because they thought it was of no value. In England, most of the Clubs refused to permit their members to make use of the convention at all and one well known Bridge-writer spoke of it as nothing better than “licensed cheating.” The present day agitation over the four-card suit bids is the cause of much heated discussion. A prominent writer-authority in this country speaks of such bids as on a par with cheating and, in his opinion, more of a handicap than a help to the players who make use of them. If his reasoning is sound and the bids are a hindrance to their users, I wonder where the cheating comes in? It must be that the poor, unfortunate players of this terrible convention are cheating themselves. Well, why stop them? If a player believes a four-card suit is a good thing to bid in a certain position—I am strongly in favor of it—he has a perfect right to try it out and

there is not the least tinge of unfairness in connection with such play. My contemporary's point of view is as immature as that of the little girl who was watching a workman tiling the bath-room floor. At a difficult angle, he tried several tiles to make a fit, but was unable to find one that would do. Picking up one of regular size, he placed it on a block and started to clip it down. The tiny miss was quite aghast at this clear breach of the rules. "Look, mamma, look," she whispered, "he's cheating!"

Sometimes the informatory double of a suit bid is made, with the doubler having great strength in the suit doubled. This appears to be contrary to the accepted meaning of the double and a player writes me to inquire if such procedure is not dishonest. It seems that the injured party rebid his hand, was again doubled and defeated for five hundred points. The hand was not sent me so I cannot reproduce it here, but I would say that the only player who had a just claim to make of being cheated was the partner of the player who rebid. The opportunity for doubles of this character are not uncommon and are sound and proper plays. The partner of the doubler makes his forced bid and if the original bidder is foolish enough to continue with his suit, the penalty inflicted cannot be too severe. Doubles of this kind are called "camouflage doubles" and sharp players quickly recognize the situation. When a player's one-trick suit-bid is doubled and Third Hand is void of the suit, it does not require a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that it is either a camouflage double or Fourth Hand will be very long in the suit. A hand came up recently that lost the rubber game because the opponent was quicker than the partner to recognize a position of this kind.

the three of Hearts, East won with the Ace and the Queen was returned. South took it with the King and the Queen of Clubs drove out the Ace. On the Heart return, South's Jack was better than anything West could produce, and two rounds of Clubs left dummy in the lead. The low Diamond was led through, but East did not put up on honor, because he could not save the game unless his partner had as good as the Jack. South won with the Jack, cashed in the balance of the Clubs and then the Ace, followed by a low Diamond, put East in the lead to play a Spade up to the major tenace in the dummy. The Declarant succeeded in taking in ten tricks against East's strong holding, landing the game and rubber. Now, let us see what would have happened if West had used the same method of reasoning as that applied by South.

Apparently, East has made an informatory double of North's secondary Spade bid, but South refuses to chance a pass up to West and North does not rebid the Spades. Not having bid originally, North's Spades must have wide, open spaces and East's double is not what it seems. Having diagnosed the situation correctly, West should utilize the only probable chance to lead that he is likely to have on this deal, to open a Spade, even though he is departing from the recognized standards of conventional play. On the original Spade lead, South is in trouble immediately. He cannot tell whether the length in Spades is with West or East, although all the evidence points to West. If the Queen is played to the first trick, the Declarant will have to play well to escape being set on his contract and making the game is out of the question. Reading the bidding correctly is often as great a factor in determining the result of close hands, as is the proper reading of the cards.

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

HELPLESS!

WHILE there are some deals at Bridge where the contracting hands are so powerful that the defense is more or less perfunctory, it is surprising how many of these apparently "lay-down-hands" might be saved by skilful and quick-thinking players. Time and again the platitude is uttered: "Partner, we were absolutely helpless on that hand." Players who refuse to be overawed by big hands into following suit like a lot of trained pigs, can often locate the flaw in Achilles' heel and defeat hands that appear invulnerable. On the following hand the Declarant won the game and rubber. If the defense had been a bit more keen, South's doleful remark: "They held the ship," might have been blithely: "down one."

	♠ 6		
	♥ K J 10 8 6 2		
	♦ K Q 9 2		
	♣ 7 5		
♠ K Q 10 9 8 5			♠ J 7 3
♥ 9 5 3			♥ A Q 7
♦ 8 6			♦ J 10 4
♣ A K			♣ Q J 8 2
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
	♠ A 4 2		
	♥ 4		
	♦ A 7 5 3		
	♣ 10 9 6 4 3		

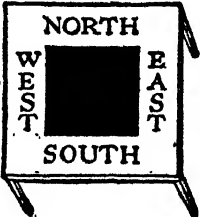
West dealt and bid a Spade, North overcalled with two Hearts, East went to Two Spades and after South passed, West jumped to three Spades. This last bid closed the bidding and North opened the King of Diamonds. South played the seven and North was encouraged to continue the suit. West trumped the third round, played the King of Spades, which was taken by the Ace and another Diamond ruff put West in to draw the trumps, play the Ace and King of Clubs and win the game without even taking the Heart finesse, as the two losing Hearts were discarded on the Queen-Jack of Clubs in the dummy. Played properly, this hand can be saved against any defense of the adversaries and careless play by the Declarant will even lose the contract.

The opening lead of the King of Diamonds is the correct play, but South should overtake it with the Ace and lead the Singleton Heart. While it is not orthodox play to lead up to a major tenace suit, the play marks South with the Singleton and, unless his partner holds a five-card Diamond suit, the ruff that will save the game is assured. The ten of Hearts forces the Queen and on the trump lead, South should win with the Ace and return the Diamond. North will be in with the King and the high Heart forces dummy to cover with the Ace. South trumps and, unless the Declarant has had the foresight to keep his high trump in the dummy, he cannot re-enter to obtain a discard of his losing Heart. In any event, the game must be saved by this line of play and there is at least a chance to defeat the contract.

Many games are lost by players who take things for granted, when it is not necessary to do so. While it may be extremely probable that a certain suit will "break," it

is bad play to chance everything on such a contingency, unless there is no other method of procedure.

On the hand illustrated below, there was no necessity of burning all bridges before finding out the lay of the land—and the cards.

		♠ A J 8	
		♥ 6 3	
		♦ A 10 7 5 4 2	
		♣ 7 4	
♠ 9 5 4 2			♠ 6
♥ A K Q J 9 5 4			♥ 8 7 2
♦ K Q			♦ J 9 8 6 3
♣ —			♣ J 10 9 3
			
		♠ K Q 10 7 3	
		♥ 10	
		♦ —	
		♣ A K Q 8 6 5 2	

South was the dealer and his Spade bid was overcalled by West with two Hearts. North helped the Spades and West continued the Hearts up to four. When South bid four Spades, West doubled and South, on his freak distribution, redoubled. The Hearts were opened and the Declarant ruffed the second round. With nine Clubs, headed by the three top honors, it hardly seemed possible that the suit could be stopped, so the trumps were taken out, and then the blow fell! West was void of Clubs and the Declarant was compelled to accept defeat to the extent of two hundred points on a hand that appeared

invincible. He endeavored to console himself with the usual, "partner, we were helpless on the freak distribution. If I had led the Clubs, the very first round would have been trumped." It is, of course, apparent that, unless the Clubs are solid, it is useless to take out the trumps. Correct play would be to lead one round and find out what happens. If both hands follow, then the way is easy for a big score. Should the first lead be ruffed, the Declarant can still make his contract by either of two methods of play. After West ruffs, his best play is the King of Diamonds, which dummy wins with the Ace. South now having the long trump, can take out three rounds of trumps and concede East one trick in Clubs. Or, West can be given another Club ruff, and then a losing Club can be ruffed in dummy with the Ace of trumps, and the trumps taken down, after which the balance of the Clubs can be made for game, losing but two tricks in trumps and one in Hearts.

This deal tends to show the great value of four trumps, when held by one opponent. Quite often it is essential that one or more trumps must be permitted to make before the hand can be brought in.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

JUDGMENT

THE most trying player at the Bridge-table is the one who insists upon playing at least seventy-five per cent of the hands. He rescues his partner with strength or weakness and always has another bid of some sort, when his partner takes him out. It is not much fun to play cards with a monologist of this kind and little can be done to squelch him aside from the free use of a black-jack or a gag.

To bid three suits against the adversaries No Trump requires an extraordinary distribution, together with optimism of the highest order. When the rubber game is in danger of being lost, it is perhaps justifiable to overbid in the endeavor to save it, but when the enemy are a game in, it is better to allow them to win a minimum rubber then and there, than to set out to win two games in succession, irrespective of penalties, perspicacity, or personal pulchritude. With a rubber on its last leg, it rarely pays to resort to artificial respiration, unless saving it will at least put it on even terms. To take a penalty of five hundred points, only to lose out on the next deal is very bad policy and while it may show considerable nerve, it is hardly sound Bridge. The player who is continually fighting the cards is very much like a bull that a Texas farmer had to keep well fenced in to prevent him from disputing the right of way with a railroad adjoining

the farm. The bull's particular aversion was the appearance of an engine dragging the daily freight, that seemed to puff defiance at him as it slowly steamed up-grade. After many attempts, Mr. Bull succeeded in breaking through and proceeded to attack his enemy, head-on. The engineer saw him coming and stopped, so the bull took the first game with a rattling good bump. As the engine slowly retreated down-grade, the bull thought to accelerate its movements and this time charged down with full speed. Of course the bull had overbid his hand—or head—and a game went to the engine. The bull picked himself up, a bit stunned, but not a whit subdued. With each a game in and the rubber in sight, a good, strong "bid" ought to discomfit the adversary. It so happened that the engineer was a man of little patience and having all suits stopped—except the law—he called, "without," and came along with open throttle, winning the rubber with flying colors, mostly red.

At the impromptu inquest, a neighbor who had witnessed the battle, remarked to the bull's owner, "that derved critter suttinly had a heap of nerve."

"Yaas," agreed the sorrowing farmer, "I sure do admire his nerve, but damn his judgment."

Unquestionably, more points can be saved by good judgment at critical times, than in any other way. A situation that arises time and again is when a player makes a secondary bid to indicate a lead and finds the partner with no support for the suit bid. Holding proper values for a take-out, there is no problem involved, but when this is not the case, then the attempted rescue is the greatest instigator of trouble that the game produces. With a worthless singleton of the partner's secondary suit-bid, most players seem to think that they must take-out, no

matter what their holding consists of. Indeed, a number of text-books strongly advocate such procedure. If the partner would only wait and see if the contract is doubled, before jumping to the rescue, it would not be so bad. Often, the Fourth Hand will not double and the game may be saved at a comparatively small penalty. Again, a bid by Fourth Hand will relieve the tension. At any rate, it will usually work out to good advantage "not to cry until hurt."

On the hand following, a saving of over 600 points was scored in a duplicate match, wholly dependent upon whether North insisted upon rescuing, or refusing to make a seeming bad matter worse:

		♠ 10 8 5 3	
		♥ 3	
		♦ Q 8 6 4 2	
		♣ A K 7	
♠ K 7 2			♠ A J
♥ A 9 4			♥ Q 8 6
♦ A 10 5			♦ K J 9 3
♣ Q J 10 6			♣ 9 5 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ Q 9 6 4	
		♥ K J 10 7 5 2	
		♦ 7	
		♣ 8 3	

South had the deal and passed. West bid No Trump, which passed around to South, who now made a second-

dary bid of two Hearts. West was not sufficiently strong to rebid with but one stopper in Hearts, but North in nearly every instance became panic-stricken and either bid three Diamonds or two No Trumps. In either case, East had a sound double. The Diamond bid was an obvious double and the No Trump denying partner's Hearts, marked West with something in that suit. The two No Trump take-out seemed to hold sway and was defeated for four hundred points. The Diamond was led, won by the Ace and the ten returned. A Club switch gave the enemy two tricks each in Clubs and Spades, one trick in Hearts and four in Diamonds. Although North held the singleton three of his partner's secondary bid, the hand did not call for a rescue. The question might be open for debate if East doubled, but without that contingency, a pass was the soundest thing to do. It will be noted that while South's bid is not up to the quick trick requirements, it stands the only chance of saving the game by driving the adversaries away from the No Trump make. Without the Heart bid, North's Diamond opening gives the No Trump bidder a certain game.

Played at my table, West made an informatory double over my secondary Heart bid and East left the double in. West has not a good double after his bid of No Trump, which accounts for the trouble he got into. My partner, even after the double, did not interfere and I was allowed to struggle with my doubled contract. The Queen of Clubs was led, won in dummy and the finesse of the ten of Hearts drove out the Ace. The Ace of Diamonds came next, followed by the ten which I ruffed and played two rounds of trumps. East was then in the lead and returned the Club, dummy winning and leading a low

Spade. Losing two Spade tricks, two Hearts and one Diamond permitted me to fulfill the doubled contract and land the game on a hand that every North player but one thought they could not afford to leave in.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

THE SINGULARNESS OF SINGLETONS

WHEN the initial opening of a singleton works out badly, it appears to be particularly aggravating to many players. Some players go so far as to say that they never lead a singleton, unless the suit has been bid by their partner, and the idea seems to prevail in some circles that singletons are the worst openings that can be made and are entirely taboo among good players.

Of course this is untrue and with the proper type of hand, a singleton lead is not merely correct, but practically the only one that should be made.

Holding two or three worthless trumps, with two suits headed by an Ace or a King, then a singleton opening is to be recommended. But, when the leader holds four or five trumps, together with a suit of four or more cards, the long suit is decidedly preferable as an opening lead. This rule has 'worked advantageously, both at Whist and at Bridge for many years, and some of the biggest swings have been registered by the experienced players who will not make a short opening when they hold length in trumps. Even with four insignificant trumps, it requires four leads of the adversaries high trumps, before they can hope to bring in their long suit. The old-time player need not be told that, when he opens a long suit, he has better than an even chance of establishing it, because

holding at least four himself, the partner averages to hold as many as either one of the adversaries. On a short opening with 26 cards held by the enemy and only 13 held by the partner, the chances are more than two to one against the leader. Playing at the Cavendish Club, one session of tournament play produced two deals where a tremendous gain was made by the players who understood this principle of opening leads.

♠ 7
 ♥ K 8 7 5 4
 ♦ 10 6 5 2
 ♣ A J 7

♠ A 8 6 4 3
 ♥ 10
 ♦ A Q 8 7 3
 ♣ K 10

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

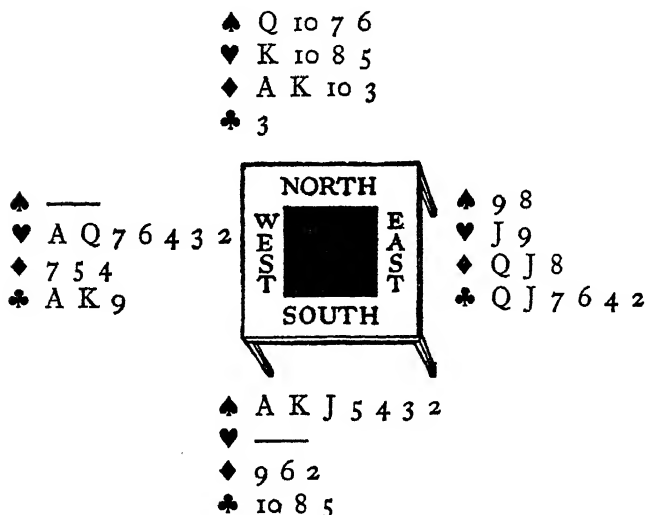
♠ 5
 ♥ Q 9 6 2
 ♦ K J 9 4
 ♣ 8 5 3 2

♠ K Q J 10 9 2
 ♥ A J 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 9 6 4

amonds, notwithstanding the major tenace that be held, a force was at once put on the Declarant. After the Clubs were established, West got in with the Ace of Spades and another force in Diamonds set up a "long" trump in West's hand. This situation was quickly disclosed when the Declarant tried to exhaust the trumps, but he was helpless and could take in only eight tricks—a penalty of a hundred points, instead of scoring a Small Slam doubled. Oddly enough, a number of the players who could see nothing but the singleton opening, labelled the hand as merely an "unfortunate." Played at one table, North rescued the three Spades doubled, with a bid of four Hearts, which East doubled. Coincidentally, East opened the singleton Spade and was given the ruff by his partner, but after that, the enemy gathered in the balance of the tricks, scoring one over their doubled contract. With the Diamond opening, even though dummy succeeds in trumping two or three Diamonds, the Heart contract should be defeated two tricks.

Often, the desire to punish an adversary's palpable overbid is so strong, that a player permits his judgment to become biased to such an extent, that he doubles the opposing bid, when sound tactics would demand a raise of the partners bid.

Combining poor strategy of this kind with bad play of the cards, is likely to result in a loss of close to a thousand points on a single hand.



South dealt and preempted with three Spades, but West refused to be silenced and bid four Hearts. There is no question as to North's proper procedure. Holding four cards of the partner's suit together with excellent quick trick support, an immediate raise should be given and if the opponents continue bidding, then it is time enough to consider a double. North, however, visualizing fabulous penalties, passed up the chance for a certain game and doubled.

South, having bid the extreme limit on his original bid, could not go on and the deal was played at four Hearts doubled.

Again the insidious singleton hypnotised the opener and the three of Clubs was started. West won with the Ace and led a low Heart which North took with the King and played a low Spade. North figured his partner would get

in with the Spade, give him a Club ruff and the two high Diamonds would give him a minimum penalty of two hundred points. He had planned well but his execution was—favored by his partner. The Declarant trumped the first round of Spades, played a low Heart to dummy's Jack, ruffed himself in with the second Spade, pulled the balance of the trumps and discarded three Diamonds on the three long Clubs in the dummy, scoring twelve tricks for a Small Slam. With the proper Spade opening, the contract will be defeated unless the Declarant finesses the nine on the first Heart trick. North, of course, should play low as his one chance for two trump tricks.

On sound bidding, South would play the deal at Spades and score eleven tricks against any defense, with a good chance to make a Small Slam, if West led the Ace of Hearts, after the King of Clubs showed a singleton Club was in the dummy.

North's contention that he had a right to double a contract of four Hearts, holding four to the King—ten over the maker, was on a par with the epitaph in a country church-yard.

"Here lies the body of William Jay
He died maintaining his right of way.
He was right, dead right, as he sped along,
But he is just as dead as if he was wrong."

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

TOO LATE!

TO obtain the best results from a difficult Bridge hand, requires something more than mere perfunctory knowledge and mechanical skill. When the adversaries are capable of playing their cards to the best advantage, many hands that seem a "lay-down" for game, may be defeated for hundreds of points, unless "vision" is met with "supervision" and the best defense is met with perfect offense. Very often a deal that appears to be good for a certain game, meets with an unexpected defense that changes the entire aspect of the situation. Instead of trying to circumvent such procedure, many players are too prone to admit defeat and give up the ghost. On the following deal, over a thousand points difference would have been registered if the Declarant, on the rubber game, had succeeded in playing the hand for all it was worth.

	♠ A J		
	♥ 10 9		
	♦ A 7 3		
	♣ A K Q J 4 2		
♠ K 8 7 3			♠ 5
♥ A K Q 8 6 2			♥ J 7 5 4 3
♦ K Q			♦ J 9 4 2
♣ 10			♣ 9 6 3

	♠ Q 10 9 6 4 2	
	♥ —	
	♦ 10 8 6 5	
	♣ 8 7 5	

North dealt and started with a Club, which South overcalled with a Spade. West mentioned the Hearts and South finally landed the contract at four Spades, doubled by West and redoubled by North. The King of Hearts was opened, ruffed by South and a low Spade led. The Jack finesse held and the play of the Ace located the two missing Spades with West. It is apparent now, that the Declarant cannot get his hand in without ruffing another Heart. Should he attempt this play to force out the King of trumps in West's hand, another Heart ruff will ruin him. The Hearts will be brought in and the hand set for four hundred points. Playing the Clubs and permitting West to make two trump tricks is the correct play at this stage, as the Declarant will have but one Diamond trick to lose at the end and will succeed in fulfilling his contract. All this was nicely thought out by South, but West skilfully wrecked the craft, by refusing to trump the

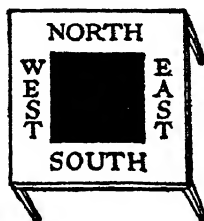
second round of Clubs. Instead, he discarded a Heart and ruffed the third round, after which he led the King of Diamonds. This play effectually removed the reëntry for the Club suit and there was nothing left for South to do, but take a Diamond discard on the Club, West ruffing with the King of Spades. Losing two Diamond and two trump tricks, the Declarant was set for only one trick. Granting the excellence of West's defense, the Declarant was wholly to blame for losing this hand. Correct tactics by South would not have given West the opportunity to distinguish himself. At the fourth trick, when the Declarant led the Club, he was several tricks too late to save the game. After trumping the first trick, it should be apparent that, not only the game, but a Small Slam can be made, unless all five missing trumps are in one hand. Such a distribution seems most unlikely, because if it were so, the adversaries would doubtless have doubled three Spades, instead of waiting until the contract got to four. The error was in taking the trump finesse. This play could not gain unless West held exactly two trumps. Proper play would have been to take the first Spade trick with the Ace, lead the Jack and overtake with the Queen, so as to obtain an uninterrupted run of the suit if West refused to win the second round. After forcing out the King of Spades, the Declarant must take the balance of the tricks. Should West lead the King of Diamonds, it must be won with the Ace in dummy and now the Declarant can afford to ruff himself in the lead with the Heart, so that he can draw West's remaining trumps. The six Club tricks will afford discards of the three losing Diamonds and the only trick that the enemy can take is the King of Spades.

Possibly the most exasperating type of hand to play is

the one that seems easy for the game until everything goes wrong. The apparently set-up suit is stopped by the opponent and the "natural finesse" proves to be a loser. To allow for such contingencies and still win out, requires technique somewhat above the average.

♠ A Q 4
♥ 10 6 3
♦ Q 5 3 2
♣ Q 9 6

♠ 10 8 6 2
♥ A Q 9 4
♦ 10
♣ J 8 7 2



♠ K J 9 5
♥ K 8
♦ J 9 8 7
♣ 10 4 3

♠ 7 3
♥ J 7 5 2
♦ A K 6 4
♣ A K 5

South secured the contract with a bid of one No Trump, disdaining the four-card suit bid with a holding of four quick tricks. The four of Hearts was opened and three rounds of the suit were played, setting up the Jack with the Declarant. On the third round of Hearts, East discarded the nine of Spades and West led the two of that suit. At this point, the time to count was at hand. If the Diamond suit will "break" or the Spade finesse "stand-up," the game cannot be lost. East's discard of the nine is a "come-on" card so the Spade finesse appears to be a forlorn hope. West has shown a holding of

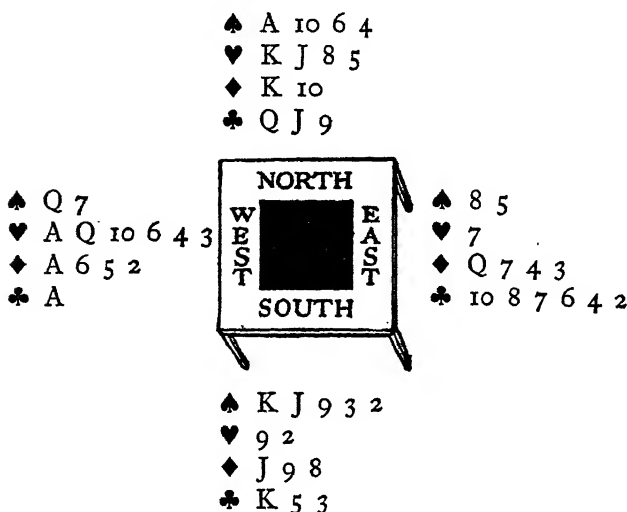
four Hearts and probably has four Spades also. In response to his partner's call, he led the two, which should be from a suit of four, or a singleton. If the latter, then East originally held seven to the King-Jack-ten, hardly possible without a bid. With eight cards accounted for, West must have five cards in Clubs and Diamonds, which must be divided either three and two or four and one. If a five-card suit were in West's hand, that suit should have been opened, in lieu of the four-card Heart suit. Should the distribution be three and two, then the Diamonds will fall and the game is assured for the Declarant. In the event of the division being four Clubs and one Diamond, can the Declarant still make the game, or are the possibilities exhausted? With four Diamonds in East's hand, the game can still be forced at this stage against the best defense. The Spade must be ducked, East winning with the Jack. On the lead of a Club, Declarant takes in three Clubs and three Diamonds, holding the lead in his hand at the end. The Jack of Hearts now forces East to discard his last Diamond or unguard the King of Spades. The court of last resort is usually the squeeze play.

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

HIDDEN INFERENCES

THERE is no question but that a large number of hands that are lost, might be saved if the opponents could always find the best defense. It is not necessarily bad play when a lead is made that loses the game, if nothing has occurred in the bidding or play to act as a guide. To always guess right is impossible, but very often there is an inference or a slight clue that tends to direct the sharp player into the proper course to pursue. When the inference is marked, to omit taking advantage of it, is just as poor play, as to trump the partners high card or to forget what has been played.

It is, however, on the hidden deductions, that most players fail to grasp the important significance. What is termed a bad guess, is very often the direct result of failure to observe and correctly interrupt opposing bids that should be quite illuminating and helpful. There are considerably more hands of this kind than most players seem to think and a little time devoted to study of such situations would improve the game of many players.

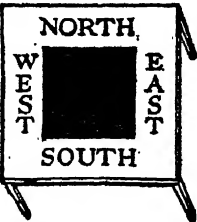


North had the deal and bid one No Trump, which was passed by East and South, West overcalling with two Hearts. This was passed around to South, who now bid two Spades. West went to three Hearts and North helped the Spades to three, which bought the contract. If West had ventured to four Hearts, North would have doubled and set the hand for three or four hundred points. Many South players would have at once rescued the partner's No Trump with two Spades. On South's normal distribution, the hand should play better at No Trumps if there is no opposing declaration. As a matter of fact, the game at No Trump is quite easy on normal play with either a Heart or Club opening. For West to have doubled the Spades would have been bad play. The bidding would indicate that East's cards were negligible and while the contract might be defeated for a trick, the extra fifty points was not worth the risk of losing the game if the

doubled contract could be made. The opening lead was the Ace of Clubs and East's play of the deuce precluded the possibility of the King of Clubs being in that hand. With the powerful dummy exposed, it seems a forlorn hope to get East in the lead, so that he can give his partner the ruff in Clubs that will save the game. It appeared to West that his best chance was to underlead the Diamond and if the Declarant did not hold the Queen, he would be compelled to make a hard guess to win the game. The Declarant, however, fully cognizant of West's bid and rebid of the Hearts without holding either the King or Jack, marked him with the Ace of Diamonds and won the game by putting up the King in dummy, losing but one trick each in Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs. If the Declarant had played blindly, without considering the bidding inferences, the natural play would have been to permit the Diamond lead to "ride," as the Jack in his hand must stop the suit on the third round, irrespective of the position of the Ace and Queen. Played at the second table in a team match, this hand was made a big winner, by correct reasoning on the part of West. The bidding was the same as at the first table and the opening lead as before, was the Ace of Clubs. That the game must be lost unless East can be gotten in the lead is apparent, but the Diamond underplay to be successful requires loose play on the part of the Declarant and also the Queen of Diamonds in East's hand. If there was no better way, the chance should nevertheless be taken, but there is a much simpler method of saving the game on this hand. The bidding of South was considerably more informative than was West's and taking advantage of it, not only enables West to save the game, but to defeat the contract. With ten Hearts in his hand and in the dummy, there are

but three cards in that suit not accounted for. The Declarant originally passed his partners No Trump bid and subsequently bid two Spades. With a void suit or holding a singleton, South would have bid the Spades at once, if at all, so he is marked with at least two Hearts. East, therefore, cannot hold more than one and must be able to ruff the second round of Hearts. West played the Ace of Hearts for the second lead and the Declarant tried to disguise the situation by dropping the nine of Hearts instead of the two. The Ace of Diamonds was played next so that the partner should not err in returning Diamonds instead of Clubs, after which a ruff in Hearts by East and a Club return set the contract for one trick.

When the cards break badly and seem to deprive the player of a game that appears a certainty, a bit of self criticism may be more instructive than berating the luck.

	♠ A J 7 5	
	♥ 8	
	♦ A K J	
	♣ A K Q 9 2	
♠ Q 10 3		♠ K 8 6 2
♥ K Q 10		♥ 9 6 3
♦ 6 2		♦ Q 9 8 5 3
♣ J 8 5 4 3		♣ 7
	♠ 9 4	
	♥ A J 7 5 4 2	
	♦ 10 7 4	
	♣ 10 6	

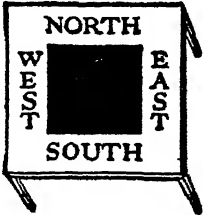
On this deal North started with a Club bid and secured the contract for two No Trumps after South had twice rescued with the Hearts. The bidding was not open to criticism and the opening Diamond lead was conventional. With the Club suit bunched against him, the Declarant took in but eight tricks, even after the advantageous Diamond opening. While the distribution was unexpected and unusual, nine tricks and game were in sight after the opening lead and should have been made by correct play. Instead of taking it for granted that the Clubs would drop, the game was assured by permitting the opponents to win one trick in the suit. A slam being out of the question, one trick is a small cost to pay for making the game against any distribution of the cards.

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CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

HANDS WE LOVE TO HOLD

MANY Bridge players who play considerably better than the average game, seem to be afflicted with bad "breaks" of the cards and just fail to make the game on hands that appear safe for Democracy. When the quota of hard-luck hands gets a bit excessive, it is time to sit up and take notice. Very often, a player capable of deducing certain facts from the bidding is so pleased with himself, that he ceases to reason further and so fails to properly apply the knowledge he has obtained. One of the worst faults of some players is their anxiety to ruff a losing card in their dummy. Strange as it may seem, such procedure is not always the best thing to do. When the dummy holds a sufficient number of trumps to exhaust those held adversely—what's the hurry? Again, the immediate ruff in dummy may force a disadvantageous lead that will lose more than it has gained. The following hand appears quite simple and yet a prominent tournament player found it difficult to overcome the bad break of the cards:

	♠ 9 8 5 3 2	
	♥ J 9 7 6	
	♦ 9	
	♣ K 6 2	
♠ Q 10 7		♠ J 4
♥ 8 5 3		♥ 4 2
♦ K Q J 8 3 2		♦ 10 7 6 4
♣ A		♣ Q J 8 7 3
	♠ A K 6	
	♥ A K Q 10	
	♦ A 5	
	♣ 10 9 5 4	

South had the deal and bid a Heart, which was overcalled by West with two Diamonds. The contract was finally won by South at four Hearts. West bid two tricks beyond his capabilities, on one dubious assist from his partner, because the game appeared lost if the enemy secured the contract. The King of Diamonds was opened, won by the Ace and the five of Diamonds ruffed in dummy. After three rounds of trumps, South was in the lead and awoke to the fact that, unless the Ace of Clubs was with West, there would be no balm in Gilead. Of course, the bidding strongly indicated the position of this important card and the Declarant was well aware of it. On the low Club lead, West clattered up with the Ace, principally because the revoke penalty is so severe, and another Diamond lead forced the last trump from the Declarant and scuttled the ship. Running with his remaining winning cards, South took in but nine tricks,

the contract being defeated for fifty points. That the game could have been won in several different ways is apparent, but the outstanding mistake was to ruff the Diamond at once. The best play would have been to set up the Spade suit while the dummy had two cards of reëntry, one in Clubs and one in trumps. Three rounds of trumps, followed by three rounds of Spades, would have held the enemy down to two tricks, all they were entitled to. Even after the initial misplay, Declarant could still have made the game by drawing only two rounds of trumps before leading the Clubs. When West is in with the Ace of Clubs, his only chance is to lead the remaining trump. If Declarant does not make the mistake of taking out the King of Clubs, he can yet win the game by setting up the Spades. It is well to bear in mind that usually the safest method of winning the game is to set up a long suit, if it is possible to do so.

One of the freakiest hands I ever played was the one following. With a hand so powerful as this, it would seem that there was little room for much variation and yet the deal showed a gain in a duplicate match of 610 points.

♠	—	♠	9	7	6	2
♥	9 6 3	♥	8	4		
♦	J 10 9 7 6 4	♦	8	5	3	2
♣	10 6 5 3	♣	8	7	4	

♠ 4

♥ K Q J 10 7 5 2

♦ K Q

♣ Q J 9

NORTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

♠ A K Q J 10 8 5 3

♥ A

♦ A

♣ A K 2

South dealt, and at the first table, the opening bid was six No Trumps. To dally with a hand as strong as this seemed foolish and so the limit was at once bid. West pondered deeply, but having profound respect for South's judgment and ability, he passed and the contract went at the opening bid and scored a Grand Slam! The King of Hearts was opened, won by the Ace and eight rounds of Spades put West in dire distress. After the first five discards, West made overtures for an armistice but Bridge is Bridge and discarding often fits Sherman's description of war. West guessed wrong and the ten of Clubs won the last trick.

At the second table, I held the South hand and ventured to bid one No Trump in fear and trembling. West doubled informatorily, which I would have done with his hand, and East bid two Spades. It will be noted that North did not think it incumbent on him to rescue, without a vestige of a quick trick. If East were sufficiently strong to pass the double, then a redouble by South would be a request for North to bid. Knowing that West did not have more than one small Spade, and would not permit the Spade bid to remain in under any circumstances, I passed and West bid three Hearts. North and East passed and my three No Trumps were overcalled with four Hearts. At four No Trumps, West evidently considered himself sufficiently affronted, and doubled. I redoubled, knowing that if West dragged himself out with five Hearts, he would surely double my five No Trumps. However, the redouble was left in, West taking cognizance of the fact that I had not thought it worth while to bid over the two Spades. Of course, if East had a single stopper in the suit he was forced to bid, which seems hardly asking too much, then West will do very well with the redouble.

On the play, West did not fare any better than at the other table and the pseudo-squeeze was again good for a Grand Slam.

And, in conclusion, I reiterate: "With an invincible hand, do not preëempt."

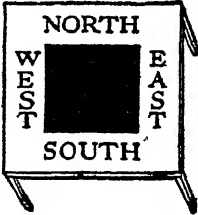
CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

UNBLOCKING

WHEN the rubber game looms up, large and inviting, then it requires great restraint to refrain from overbidding for a trick or two. One wee barbed error will harpoon a whale of a hand and flounder a game that perfect treatment would land without the aid of a net.

The biggest fish and the biggest hand is the one that gets away, but all the credit is not always due the fish, nor all the blame to the hook. Occasionally, the fisherman is no Izaak Walton. It is not winning play at Bridge to set the enemy for a few tricks when the rubber game can be won and, therefore, it is generally good tactics to drive the holder of a game-going hand to the maximum that the hand is worth. When a player is unable to win a difficult hand against sharp defense, the result is never a total loss, if some good point is brought out that will help win games in the future.

On the following hand, good defense succeeded in defeating the contract, but clever play by the Declarant would have been successful in offsetting the adversary's defensive strategy:

	♠ J 6 3		
	♥ 9 4		
	♦ 7 4 2		
	♣ Q J 5 4 2		
♠ A K 10 4		♠ 9 8 2	
♥ 2		♥ Q 8 7 5	
♦ A J 10 9 5		♦ 8 6 3	
♣ 7 6 3		♣ K 10 9	
			
	♠ Q 7 5		
	♥ A K J 10 6 3		
	♦ K Q		
	♣ A 8		

West dealt and bid a Spade, North and East passed and South bid two Hearts. On the second round, West called three Diamonds, North again passed, but East took his partner back to Spades, on the theory that the bid contracted for the same number of tricks and had a better chance for game. South persisted to four Hearts, which West and North passed. This bid was doubled by East and all hands passed. Holding four trumps to the Queen and the King of Clubs with the other two suits bid by partner, it looked to East like a sizeable sting. West opened the King of Spades, but the two from his partner caused him to switch to the Ace of Diamonds. When the Queen fell from Declarant, the Diamond continuation put him in the lead and he led the Queen of Spades in the endeavor to make the card of reëntry in dummy. It was apparent that East held three Spades and, therefore, could not ruff the third round, both from the play of the

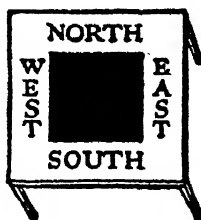
two on the first round and the bid of three Spades in preference to leaving in the partner's Diamond bid. On the lead of the Queen of Spades, West had a bad moment. If South had no more Spades, refusing to win the Queen would cost a trick and possibly the game. West's cue was in his partner's original play of the lowest Spade. If East held four Spades, with at least four in partner's hand from his bid, then South could not hold more than two. If such were the case then East would have called for another lead of Spades by playing a higher Spade than the two. If West led the Queen, East would echo, but if the Ace were led, East would play a higher one and the fall of the Queen would disclose the situation to West. On this sound reasoning, West refused to take the trick and South could do nothing but play the last Spade and trust that the enemy would make a mistake on the next lead. This they refused to do and another Diamond lead forced Declarant to trump and lose a trick each in Clubs and Hearts, the contract being defeated for 200 points. North's plaint that his partner had bid atrociously on an impossible hand, when the opponents could have been defeated for hundreds of points, was only partly true, as good play on the opening lead, would have won the game for the Declarant. East's double marks him with the King of Clubs, together with something in trumps as he holds no winning cards in the two suits bid by his partner. It is absolutely essential that dummy must get in, to lead through East's hand, or the game is hopeless. On the opening lead of the King of Spades, South should at once discard the Queen. This unblocking play cannot lose and must gain, unless East holds but two Spades and can ruff the third round, a probability hardly possible from the bidding. West's subsequent play is immaterial, as South

continues the Spades and must win a trick in dummy. Even then, Declarant must be careful to lead the Club honor instead of the trump. If the nine of Hearts is led, East must cover and now the Club trick will be lost. The first lead from dummy should be the Queen of Clubs. If East covers, the Jack of Clubs will be a card of reëntry for the trump finesse. If East refuses to cover, then the lead of the nine of Hearts stops the enemy from making a trump trick.

A situation in unblocking, that arises quite often, was sent me by a player who seemed very much chagrined at her failure to save the game. The lady wishes to know if the game could have been saved without resorting to guess-work. It could!

♠ Q 10 7 4
♥ K J 9 3
♦ J 8 6 2
♣ J

♠ J 6 3
♥ 7 5 2
♦ K 10
♣ A K Q 6 4



♠ 9 8 2
♥ 10 6
♦ 9 5 4 3
♣ 10 9 8 7

♠	A	K	5	
♥	A	Q	8	4
♦	A	Q	7	
♣	5	3	2	

South bid a Third Hand No Trump and bought the contract. The King of Clubs was opened and followed

with the Queen, East playing the eight and seven. Of course, the leader knew from the echo, that her partner held at least four, but—where was the ten? With the possibility of the singleton ten being with Declarant, the Ace was played next and the suit was blocked on the fourth round. East led the Diamond next, but with game in sight, South refused to finesse, and played the Ace, taking nine tricks for the game and rubber. Proper play when holding four or more cards of partner's suit against a No Trump declaration, is to play the second best on an honor lead and follow with the next lower card. This method of play shows at least four cards in suit and unblocks at the same time. If East had played the nine, followed by the eight, the situation would have been clear. The nine being second best, positively marks the ten, when the echo is completed on the second round. A low lead on the third round could be made without fear of loss and West could overtake the fourth lead with the Ace and save the game.

CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

UNDERLEADING

MANY plays at Bridge that seem absurdly simple when all the cards are exposed, are completely lost in the actual play of the hands. Holding the Ace-Queen over the King in dummy, most semi-experts would laugh in derision at the idea of leading out their Ace. There are times that such play is not merely advisable but obligatory. Like the old stand-bys of "always cover an honor with an honor," "always lead through strength and up to weakness," and folk-lore of such sort, it should be borne in mind that these admonitions are not set rules. As a general thing, especially for the beginner and average player, the advice would be excellent, if the "always" were omitted. The only sure "always" at Bridge is to always make your Ace of trumps.

It is surprising how often hands may be saved—and lost—by players who have sufficient initiative to depart from the line of play that is usually regarded as conventional. On the following hand, the pretty play of the Declarant would have proved futile against double-dummy defense, but the general run of play is rarely up to that standard.

♠ 9 5
♥ A J
♦ K 6 3 2
♣ A J 8 6 3

♠ 7 4
♥ K Q 7 4 3 2
♦ J 9 7
♣ 10 7

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ Q J 10
♥ 10 9 8 5
♦ A Q 10
♣ K Q 9

♠ A K 8 6 3 2
♥ 6
♦ 8 5 4
♣ 5 4 2

East dealt and bid a No Trump, which South properly passed. To bid on such a hand as South holds is very poor strategy. Having the lead, even two low Spades in North's hand, will most likely bring in the suit and save the game. Very often, bids in this position, drive the enemy into a game-going contract, when their No Trump would have done down to defeat. West went to two Hearts, which was a sound take-out and North and East passed. South, while willing to take a chance on the No Trump, had different views as to the Heart bid and preempted with three Spades. This bid is obviously a willingness to take a penalty of a trick or two in the desperate endeavor to save the game. If North has fair assistance, the penalty will be small, while with no assistance, the opponents must win the game at Hearts. West and North passed, but East doubled. It is a close point, as to whether East had

better raise the partner's bid, double or pass. As the cards lie, a four Heart contract would have been defeated by one or two tricks. On the Spade opening, North could not be prevented from making two trump tricks, if South played three rounds of Spades, because if West trumped with an Honor, North would conserve his trumps by refusing to overtrump. Played at Spades, West opened the King of Hearts, which dummy won with the Ace and led a trump. East played the ten and was permitted to hold the trick. The Declarant must lose at least one trump trick and must try to keep West out of the lead, if possible, so that the dangerous Diamond suit will not be started. East continued the Heart lead, which South trumped, led two rounds of trumps followed with a Club, finessing the eight, East winning with the nine. Another Heart was led and trumped and a second Club was played, the Jack being won by the Queen. East led the fourth round of Hearts which took the Declarant's last trump, but now the Clubs were established and South had one still left to put the dummy in. At the end, East secured one Diamond trick but the Declarant made nine tricks for his doubled contract, game and rubber. It will be noted that after the opening lead, the enemy had but one chance to save the game. When East won the first Club trick with the nine, he must know that the Declarant holds six cards in Diamonds and Clubs, because West has not followed to the Spades and South has trumped the Heart. If South held four Diamonds in his hand, he should try to set one before his trumps are exhausted, so he probably does not hold over three. If South holds three Clubs the game must be won unless East is able to set up an extra Diamond trick before the Clubs are established. The immediate lead of the Diamond, notwithstanding that it

seemed the worst possible combination to lead from, would have saved the game and was the best chance.

Saving a game, with one leg in the grave, is illustrated on the following hand. Applying the rule of eleven, together with neat false-carding, was of material help in making it difficult for the adversaries.

	♠ 6 2		
	♥ 10 8 4 3		
	♦ 9 3		
	♣ J 8 7 5 4		
♠ K Q 7		♠ A 10 8 3	
♥ A 9 6		♥ K Q 5 2	
♦ K Q 10 2		♦ A J 7 4	
♣ Q 10 9		♣ 6	

		NORTH	
W			E
E			S
S			
		SOUTH	

♠ J 9 5 4	
♥ J 7	
♦ 8 6 5	
♣ A K 3 2	

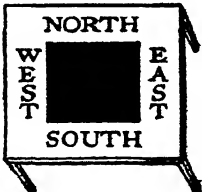
West bid a No Trump, all hands passing and North opened the five of Clubs. With the powerful dummy exposed, it looked to South that the game was lost beyond hope. Instead of playing the King, South false-carded the Ace and when the nine fell from the Declarant the suit was pretty well located. The four is marked with North and the three-two in South's hand makes it apparent that West held three originally. If West has the Queen, it cannot be prevented from making, by natural play. If West has the Queen-ten, then an underlead will practi-

cally force the ten finesse. If North holds the Queen, it makes no difference, as the suit is solid. South did return the two and the ten went to the Jack. Although North marked the King with Declarant, he continued the suit as South must have four cards both from the drop and the return of the two. Any card of reëntry that South may have will permit him to get in and save the game, by leading the remaining Club. While South's only reëntry was the camouflaged King of Clubs, it was just enough to save the game.

CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

FORCING THE BREAKS

IT cannot be denied that some hands at Bridge are wholly dependent for game upon the location of one specific card. When it is possible to mark the whereabouts of this pivotal card, either by the bidding or play, failure to do so is usually severely punished by loss of the rubber. That good players are always able to locate an important card of this kind is very much in the nature of an exaggeration. There may be guiding circumstances, or percentages favoring a certain distribution, but quite often the ranking expert and the veriest tyro are quite on a par—a plebeian “guess” is the only resource left. On the following deal, the post-mortem discussion should prove helpful, because this type of hand is not at all uncommon:

<p>♠ 10 8 4 ♥ 9 3 ♦ J 10 8 6 ♣ A 9 5 4</p>	<p>♠ J 7 3 2 ♥ K 10 5 ♦ 9 7 4 2 ♣ 10 3</p>		<p>♠ Q 9 6 ♥ A J 8 7 4 ♦ Q 5 3 ♣ 8 6</p>
<p>♠ A K 5 ♥ Q 6 2 ♦ A K ♣ K Q J 7 2</p>			

cally force the ten finesse. If North holds the Queen, it makes no difference, as the suit is solid. South did return the two and the ten went to the Jack. Although North marked the King with Declarant, he continued the suit as South must have four cards both from the drop and the return of the two. Any card of reëntry that South may have will permit him to get in and save the game, by leading the remaining Club. While South's only reëntry was the camouflaged King of Clubs, it was just enough to save the game.

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		♠ J 7 3 2	
		♥ K 10 5	
		♦ 9 7 4 2	
		♣ 10 3	
♠ 10 8 4			♠ Q 9 6
♥ 9 3			♥ A J 8 7 4
♦ J 10 8 6			♦ Q 5 3
♣ A 9 5 4			♣ 8 6

			NORTH		
	W				E
	E				A
	S				S
	T				T
			SOUTH		

♠ A K 5
♥ Q 6 2
♦ A K
♣ K Q J 7 2

South dealt and bid a No Trump, which was passed by West and North. While East's holding was rather weak, even for an overcall bid, the two Hearts were called and South went to two No Trumps, which bid secured the contract. The nine of Hearts was led, ducked by North and East, South winning with the Queen. The Clubs were started at once and West won with the Ace. The second lead of Hearts enabled East to win with the Jack and take four tricks in the suit, which with the Club trick already made, held the Declarant down to eight tricks and saved the game. North, the dummy, did not seem overly pleased at the result and contended that proper play by the Declarant would have won the game.

"Partner," came the wail, "if you had only held off once on the Hearts, they could never have stopped you from making the game. West could not hold more than two Hearts and permitting the nine to win the first trick would have effectually shut out three Heart tricks."

"Very true," replied South, "but how was I to know that the Ace of Clubs was not in East's hand? His bid of two Hearts would indicate that he held some side strength and the Ace of Clubs is the only missing sure trick. If East, instead of West holds the high Club, then the refusal to take the first Heart trick would have been the only possible way for me to lose the game."

Of course, this argument was irrefutable, as the probability of East holding the card of reëntry was really very strong.

On the next deal, the East-West combination won the rubber game and North again aired his grievance, that if the partner had been able to guess what hand held the Ace of Clubs, the result would have been reversed. Careful study will show that there were two contributory

features towards the loss of the game. First, East's bid paved the way for a Heart lead and the only chance to save the game as the cards happened to lie. Second, South did not play the hand properly, as correct play must win the game, regardless of the location of the Ace of Clubs. The two important points of this deal consist in baling West out of Hearts, provided the Ace of Clubs is in his hand, and in not permitting the Hearts to be established without hope of stopping the suit twice, if East holds the card of reëntry. Both of these objects can be easily accomplished by the simple expedient of playing the King of Hearts on the first lead. If East foolishly permits the King to hold, or wins with the Ace and continues the suit, the Declarant not only wins the game, but makes an extra, unearned trick. East's best play is to win the trick and shift to another suit in the endeavor to put partner in the lead to come through again. South knows that the "putting in" process will be impossible unless West holds the Ace of Clubs, and in that event, South's long suit will be set and the game won, before the Hearts can be established. The key to success is knowing what to do—and doing it.

Another deal that would doubtless prove puzzling to many good players:

		♠ J 6 5 2	
		♥ Q	
		♦ J 5	
		♣ A K Q 7 4 3	
♠ Q 9 7 4			♠ 10
♥ 10 9 6 5 3			♥ K J 8 2
♦ A Q 8			♦ K 9 7 4 3
♣ 6			♣ 9 8 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST [REDACTED] EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A K 8 3	
		♥ A 7 4	
		♦ 10 6 2	
		♣ J 10 5	

On the rubber game South had the deal and bid one Spade, which bought the contract without further competition. The Heart was opened, won by the Ace and from then on the play was what the average player would call conventional. It must be remembered that the Declarant cannot tell that the Spades are massed against him and hopes for a three and two distribution of the suit. The Heart was returned and ruffed in dummy; a low Spade put South in to lead the last Heart for dummy to ruff. On the lead of the Jack of Spades, East showed out, and West could not be prevented from winning two tricks in trumps and holding the contract down to eight tricks. If Declarant, instead of leading the last trump from dummy, had led a Diamond, to try and ruff out the third round of that suit, West would have led the Queen of Spades, dropping the Jack and Ace together, still hold-

ing the opponents to eight tricks. A better way to play this hand would have been not to ruff dummy at all. If the opposing trumps are divided three and two, even though the Queen does not fall, the enemy cannot save the game as they can take but two tricks in Diamonds and one in trumps, before dummy gets in and affords all needful discards on the set-up Club suit. The perfect play would have been to discount the possibility of four trumps being in one hand, as they actually were. When the King of Spades on the second trick, drops the ten from East, a low Spade should be led next. Whether West puts up the Queen or not is immaterial, the game cannot be saved if the Declarant plays this way. It is true that East might have held the singleton Queen, which could have been caught by playing the Ace, but on the rubber deal, the all important thing is to win the game.

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CHAPTER FIFTY

SUIT SYMMETRY

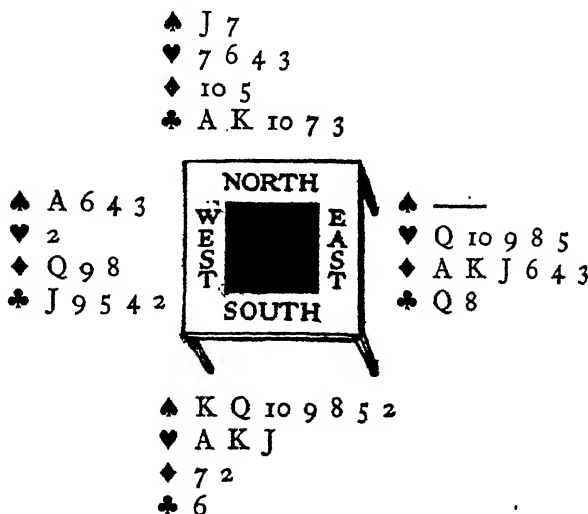
ONE of the fads holding the interest of advanced Bridge players is distribution and the correlation of one suit with another. Over sixty years ago, Dr. Pole, in his philosophy of Whist, ably discussed the play of Whist hands and advised a changed treatment for deals that contained abnormalities of distribution. At this day, Mr. Ely Culbertson advocates a distinct method of Bridge play, based largely upon the division of suits and what he names the horizontal and vertical suit distribution. While, undoubtedly, there is much in this theory that should be of benefit to studious players, it can hardly be called an exact system. To rescue the partner's No Trump bid when holding a five-card major suit together with a singleton, is generally conceded to be good play, if the hand contains certain top-card strength. But, when the rescue is advised on four-card suits with singleton holdings, I am far from being convinced. In the play of a hand, I have always been guided to some extent by the appearance of a singleton. With a five- or six-card suit and a singleton, I play the hand on the presumption that one other hand will contain a singleton, also. This should not be construed into meaning that each of the four hands contain a singleton, but only two of the hands in that deal. The difference in treatment is apparent in the play of the following hand:

		♠ K 5 4 2		
		♥ 10 5 3		
		♦ Q J 8 6		
		♣ 10 4		
♠ J				♠ Q 9 6
♥ A K 9 7 4				♥ Q J 8 2
♦ 10 3 2				♦ 7 5
♣ A K 8 6				♣ 9 5 3 2
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>			
		♠ A 10 8 7 3		
		♥ 6		
		♦ A K 9 4		
		♣ Q J 7		

South dealt and bid a Spade, West two Hearts, North two Spades, East and South passed, West rebid the Hearts to three and South went to three Spades. East now helped his partner to four Hearts, and South's four Spades closed the bidding. The King of Hearts was opened, followed by the King and Ace of Clubs and the Ace of Hearts was ruffed by Declarant. A low Spade was won by the King in dummy and on the return of the suit, East played the nine and the game depended upon taking or refusing the finesse. With nine trumps in two hands and normal distribution of the remaining suits, the chances favor playing for an even break. Holding a singleton Heart, the Declarant looks for a singleton in one of the other hands. The dummy is not guilty and East has followed twice to three suits. If East holds a singleton Diamond, then West holds four and the lone Spade is marked. Should East

hold more than one Diamond and West hold two Spades, then no other singletons are out and the theory of distribution is disproved on this specific deal. If West held a singleton it must have been the Spade and the finesse fulfills the contract and wins the game. It might seem that trying to locate a singleton in this way is more of a fetish than something based on actual fact. Why should a singleton be in two hands instead of in only one? It should! Logically and mathematically it works that way. Let us look into the matter and see why. Holding five cards of a suit, the balance remaining must be exactly eight cards. Divided into three hands, the closest division must be three, three and two. This division will obtain less than half the time—and there are always the other three suits to be considered. For the player who prefers to prove his own conclusions, it is a simple matter to remove from a deck the thirteen cards contained in South or West's hand, shuffle and deal the remainder into three packets. Repeat the operation a hundred, or even ten times and note how close to seventy percent of the times exactly one singleton will show up. Departing from a custom that is generally followed and winning seven times out of ten, should not be detrimental to the average player's game.

A deal where the suit symphony appeared, although it did not enter into the clever play that was needed to win the game is the one following:



South had the deal and bid a Spade, West passing, North calling two Clubs and East two Hearts. On the second round, South went to two Spades and after two passes, East bid three Diamonds. South and West now passed but North, on the partner's rebid after his denial, helped him to three Spades. East went on to four Diamonds and South to four Spades. West bid five Diamonds and after two passes, South called five Spades, which West doubled. On East's two suit showing, it appeared to South that five Diamonds were not beyond the capabilities of the adversaries, although the Diamond contract should have been defeated for one or more tricks.

Played at the Spade contract, West opened the two of Hearts, which the Declarant won and at once took two rounds of Clubs, discarding a Diamond on the second round. The trump was next led and West won with the

Ace, led a low Diamond and the Heart ruff set the contract for one trick. If the trump had been led before the Clubs, which careless players would have done, the penalty would have been three tricks, as West could have ruffed two Hearts while East made two tricks in Diamonds. Sharp play by the Declarant after the opening lead, would have produced the gratifying result of making the doubled contract against any opposing defense. Study the illustration a moment and see if the best play is apparent? That the Heart lead was a singleton is obvious, not so much from the symmetry theory as from East's original bid. If East can be prevented from obtaining the lead and giving his partner the ruff in Hearts, then all will be well. When the Queen of Clubs falls on the second round of the suit, that hand is marked, both from the bidding and play, as holding originally five Hearts, six Diamonds and two Clubs. It must be remembered that East bid up to four Diamonds, before receiving support from the partner. A third round of Clubs should be led from dummy and the last Diamond discarded from Declarant's hand. West will, of course, win the trick, but South ruffs the first Diamond lead and the Ace of Spades is the only trick left for the enemy. Even if East had held one trump, he would probably pass the Club, when South does not follow to the second round.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE

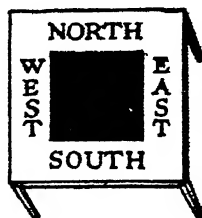
HOW SLAMS ARE MADE

WHEN a Bridge player in the course of an evening's play, holds a large number of trickless hands, he can hardly be expected to be overly cheerful. Even a player of the highest ability cannot win with worthless cards. To lose small rubbers and minimize the loss is the surest sign of a good player. The bad luck will not last forever—nothing does. It will prove helpful to a player's state of mind to endeavor to visualize the big hands that are due to come before a great while and strike an average. The reverse side of this problem is of equal importance. Holding a series of big hands, unless the maximum is made, there will not be sufficient surplus to carry over for the next lean period. To many players, the loss of a trick, or even a game, seems of little moment when they are having a lucky streak. It is this class of player who most loudly bewails his luck when the cards start to fall against him. The old maxim that "the cards never forgive," is rather more of a mathematical law than it is a fatalism.

There are quite a few hands at Bridge where the rubber game is being played and the fortunate Declarant can land the game by several different methods of play. Should he fail under such circumstances, it hardly seems that he is justified in railing at fate when the rubber is lost. Even good hands need a bit of petting.

♠ 9 8
 ♥ Q 7 3
 ♦ J 6
 ♣ K 10 8 6 4 2

♠ J 10 7 5 3
 ♥ K 10
 ♦ 9 5 2
 ♣ Q 9 5



♠ Q 4 2
 ♥ J 9 8 5
 ♦ K 8 7 4 3
 ♣ J

♠ A K 6
 ♥ A 6 4 2
 ♦ A Q 10
 ♣ A 7 3

South dealt and ventured one No Trump, which was not overcalled. With a hundred Aces and eleven of the twenty honors, it assuredly seems that the hand was good enough for the game. The five of Spades was opened and East's Queen forced the King. Holding nine Clubs headed with the Ace and King, South led the Ace, and when the Jack fell Fourth Hand, it appeared that the Queen might fall on the second round. With nine cards of the suit in sight and no singleton as a guide to the symmetry theory, the percentage seems to favor the play for an even division. Not being successful in dropping the Queen, South led another round of Clubs and West won, clearing the Spades on the next lead. The Declarant then led a low Heart, but West was on the alert and hopped up with the King. Winning three tricks in Spades and one each in Clubs and Hearts was enough to save the game. That all theories and conventions are taboo when the rubber game

is waiting to be won should be uppermost in the player's mind in this position. The finesse of the ten of Clubs must be taken, even though East should win with the singleton Queen, because the dummy's only certain card of reëntry is the third Club in Declarant's hand, and five Clubs are all that are needed to win the game and rubber. After the error of refusing the Club finesse is made, there is still another chance of winning the game and as the cards lie, this chance would have proved successful. The Club suit should be abandoned and the Jack of Diamonds led and finessed. After two rounds of Diamonds, the low Heart is led from South's hand and the King in West's hand will give Declarant the nine tricks needed for game. That this method of play is much better than the Club continuation, when the Queen does not fall, is apparent, because unless the King of Hearts is with West, the dummy cannot obtain the lead with the Queen to make the balance of the Clubs. But, the prettiest part of this deal is that perfect play by the Declarant will enable him to score a Grand Slam, irrespective of the adversaries' best defense. Properly finessing the ten of Clubs on the second round, the Jack of Diamonds should be played next. There need be no hurry in running off the set-up Clubs, as South's discards will be embarrassing and the dummy hand must be in the lead at the eleventh trick to have a chance for a squeeze play. The Diamond King being located with East, a slam must be made if West holds the King of Hearts. After three tricks are won in Diamonds, dummy discarding a Heart on third round, South plays the Ace of Hearts and then leads his remaining Club. When dummy plays the last Club at trick eleven, South holds the Ace and six of Spades, dummy holds the Queen of Hearts and the nine of Spades and West holds the Jack-ten of Spades, the

King of Hearts and an impossible discard still to come. Throwing the King permits dummy to make the Queen and discarding a Spade allows Declarant to make both of the Spades. East's cards are immaterial and it should be noted that even though he retain his two Spades, they must be lower than the six, as the original lead of the five, on the rule of eleven, locates every higher card in the suit but one. This one, the Queen, was played by East to the first trick.

At first glance, it seemed that the refusal of the Declarant to take the Club finesse at the third trick was costly merely because it meant the loss of game, but careful diagnosis showed that correct play made a difference of five tricks and a Grand Slam. When it is further considered that the rubber game could not be lost, no matter how the cards happened to lie, if the play was proper, then the difference between knowing what to do and merely guessing is greatly accentuated.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO

THE SPADE CONVENTION

WHILE certain conventions at Bridge are predicated on sound reasoning, it is a mistake to play every hand on the presumption that any arbitrary method of bidding or play must be followed. The so-called Spade convention, strongly advocated by Wilbur C. Whitehead, will undoubtedly prove a winning procedure in the majority of instances. This convention is used when a No Trump bid is doubled informatory. If the doubler's partner holds four or more Spades, he is asked to call that suit in preference to a longer and stronger Heart or minor suit. The inference is that the doubler is either prepared to support a weak Spade bid or can run to another suit or No Trumps, when normal length in Spades is shown by the partner. It is apparent that a forced Spade bid of this kind must not be supported unless the partner has exceptional strength in Spades, or the Spades are rebid by original caller. Where this convention is thoroughly understood, many hands that could only be won by a lucky guess, are made quite easy and simple. A freak bidding hand that the Spade convention should have piloted into a safe harbor, was played in a Canadian tournament and put many of the experts *hors de combat*. The loss incurred by improper bidding on this one deal, was about six hundred points.

♠ K 9 6 3			
♥ —			
♦ 7			
♣ J 10 8 7 5 4 3 2			
♠ A 8 5 2			♠ 10 4
♥ A 8 4			♥ Q J 9 6 3 2
♦ A 10 8 4			♦ K 9 5 3 2
♣ Q 6			♣ —
	<div><div>NORTH</div><div>WEST</div><div>SOUTH</div><div>EAST</div></div>		
♠ Q J 7			
♥ K 10 7 5			
♦ Q J 6			
♣ A K 9			

West had the deal and bid a No Trump, which North passed and East bid two Hearts. South doubled informatively, West passed and North bid three Clubs. I sat in the North position and the abnormal length in Clubs induced me to ignore the Spade convention for the time being. If South had doubled for a Spade bid, there would doubtless be more bids made. East now bid three Diamonds, South and West passed and I bid four Clubs. This bid should tend to show that North would have bid the Clubs without the forcing double. East went on to four Hearts, South and West passed and I now bid four Spades. If South held five or even four Spades, the game might be possible at that make, while five Clubs could not be made without strong support. It should be noted that the Club bid and rebid practically denied a holding of four Spades and upon East's pass South should have

bid five Clubs. North's belated Spade bid should be construed as holding four worthless Spades and a desire to play the hand at five Clubs, unless the original double showed exceptional strong Spade assistance. South did not grasp this inference and passed, West doubled and the choice was again left to South, but the return to Clubs was not made and the hand was defeated for three hundred points. If the adverse Spades had been divided evenly, the contract was possible and the hand was played in the hope that the distribution was favorable. Played at five Clubs, which would assuredly have been doubled, a Small Slam must be made on the Queen of Hearts opening. Dummy would refuse to cover with the King, but Declarant would ruff three rounds of the suit, putting dummy in with two trump leads. When the Ace of Hearts dropped on the third round, the nine of Clubs would be a reëntry card to afford a Diamond discard on the King of Hearts and the Ace of Spades would be the only trick that the enemy could take.

Curiously, this deal was played at the next table by the East and West pair, after the adversaries had the opportunity for a large gain. At this table, West doubled four Clubs and South, almost certain that the contract could be made, redoubled. Again, that Shylock pound of flesh! East, too, thought the Clubs would be made and bid four Hearts which South doubled and the Declarant by good play, succeeded in fulfilling his contract.

It appears that if East is forced twice with the Clubs, that South must make two trumps, together with one trick each in Spades and Diamonds, but this is not so unless East errs in taking three rounds of trumps. On the first lead of Clubs, East ruffs and leads the Queen of Hearts, South refuses to cover, but on the second round,

the ten forces the Ace. The Ace of Diamonds is now played and South is permitted to win the second round with the Queen. The Ace of Clubs follows and if East trumps, the contract will be defeated. Instead of trumping, East discards the four of Spades and South is forced to switch as dummy can ruff the third round of Clubs. On the switch, South's high trump is forced out and his remaining trump is picked up. It should be noted that if Declarant had played three rounds of Diamonds instead of only two, that South could safely force the dummy with the third round of Clubs, as East would be short of reëntries to force out the high trump and pick up the little one.

Very often a hand that seems impossible for the game can be won by sharp play.

		♠ Q 6 4 2	
		♥ 10 7	
		♦ A K 8 6	
		♣ Q 4 3	
♠ J 8 3			♠ A K 9 7
♥ 6 4 3			♥ Q 8 5
♦ J 9 4			♦ Q 5 2
♣ J 9 5 2			♣ A 7 6
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST EAST </div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div>		
		♠ 10 5	
		♥ A K J 9 2	
		♦ 10 7 3	
		♣ K 10 8	

North bid a Diamond, which East doubled, South passed and West went to two Clubs. North and East passed and South's two Hearts, secured the contract. The two of Clubs was opened, won by the Ace and East played the King of Spades. South can see that the game can hardly be won unless East kindly plays the Ace of Spades, so that the Queen in dummy will afford a discard for the losing Diamond. That East will be a good Samaritan is not likely, so it is incumbent on Declarant to further his own cause. On the King of Spades, South plays the ten, which, instead of coaxing a continuance of the suit, seems the best method of inducing a switch. East returns the Club, which can do no harm, as the original lead of the two shows the suit to be divided. Dummy is permitted to win with the Queen and now a low Spade lead puts East in a quandary. On the informatory double, West bids an indifferent four-card Club suit and so could not have had four Spades to the Jack. South is marked with at least one more Spade, and from the fall of the ten, it seems like the singleton Jack. As the cards lie, the game can only be saved by playing low on the Spade lead, but most players in East's position would not dare to take a chance on the singleton Jack winning. It might be said that if East held the Jack of Spades also, that the Declarant's camouflage play would be of no avail. This is granted freely, but no alternate method of play would have been better.

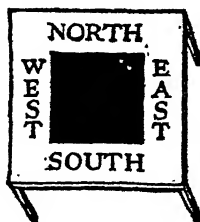
CHAPTER FIFTY-THREE

PIVOTAL HANDS

IF a Bridge-player could always do the right thing at the right time he would be unbeatable. To be able to judge the best procedure at critical times is doubtless the greatest asset that a player can have. There are countless hands where the question is so close that it seems almost the toss of a coin, whether the game can be won or lost, or a large penalty given or taken. Saving the rubber game at the cost of a minimum penalty is fine strategy, but it is a decidedly different matter when the opposing side has contracted for more than they can accomplish. On most deals there is some guiding factor to help the player to arrive at a sound conclusion and it might be instructive to endeavor to locate the flaw in the bidding of the following hand:

♠ 7 4 2
 ♥ K J 8 6 4
 ♦ 3
 ♣ 9 5 3 2

♠ A K Q 10 8 5
 ♥ Q 9 3
 ♦ J 9 7
 ♣ J



♠ J 9 6 3
 ♥ A 10 2
 ♦ K Q 5
 ♣ A 7 4

♠ —
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ A 10 8 6 4 2
 ♣ K Q 10 8 6

East dealt and bid a No Trump, South passed and West called two Spades. North and East passed, South went to three Diamonds, West three Spades and again North and East passed. Now, South showed his two-suiter by bidding four Clubs, West continued to four Spades and North helped the Clubs to five. East doubled and all hands passed. Before commenting on the bidding of this interesting deal, I will say that the contract should have been defeated for one trick, but the perfect defense that was essential to accomplish this result was not forthcoming and the contract was made—an earned reward for good bidding by the North and South players.

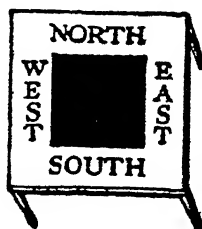
The King of Spades was opened, ruffed by South and the Ace of Diamonds played, followed by a low Diamond which dummy ruffed. A low trump was led, won by the King and another Diamond ruff set the suit. Now the

last Club was led from dummy, East again ducked and was held down to one trick each in Hearts and Clubs. East played badly in not going up on the second trump lead. It was good play to duck the first lead of trumps, because South had bid Clubs secondary and West might easily have had the Queen or King and should be given a chance to make it. When the Declarant went up with the King and dropped the Jack, East thought his partner might have the Queen, but this was rather far-fetched. South's bid could hardly have been made on less than five in suit. If East had played the Ace on the second round and forced Declarant with another Spade, it would have taken the last trump to exhaust East and the Heart trick could not be made, as East would discard on the Diamonds, the two losing Hearts. Had the contract been set, it would still have been an excellent gain for South, as game at Spades, with a large honor count was practically assured and plainly indicated by the bidding. North's assist of the Clubs to five was correct, if only as a game saving device. It appears that a penalty of not more than two tricks will be lost and from North's viewpoint, to save the game at Spades seems hopeless. If West had had the original bid on this deal, three Spades appears the best call. In view of the partner's No Trump bid, West should have bid three or four Spades. If three, then East could have jumped to four, as the game appears certain with a preemptive bid from partner. If South had ventured to bid five Diamonds over such bidding, the Clubs could hardly have been shown and the penalty at Diamonds would have been most severe.

Another deal where a five Club contract was doubled and defeated by good play:

♠ Q 10 6 3
 ♥ 10 7 5 3 2
 ♦ Q 9 5 4
 ♣ —

♠ 7 5 2
 ♥ 9 4
 ♦ 2
 ♣ K Q J 10 8 5 3



♠ A J 9
 ♥ A K Q J
 ♦ J 10 3
 ♣ 9 7 4

♠ K 8 4
 ♥ 8 6
 ♦ A K 8 7 6
 ♣ A 6 2

After East had started with a Heart, South bid Diamonds and West Clubs, until the contract went to five, which South doubled. It is apparent that, if North opens the Queen of Diamonds and follows with a little one, West cannot be prevented from making his doubled contract, as two Spades can be discarded on the set-up Heart suit, after the trumps are taken out. The correct lead of the four of Diamonds, which is proper when holding four cards of the partner's suit, enables South to infallibly count West void of the suit after the first round. North has twice supported the Diamond call, so the lead cannot possibly be short. West's rescue of the partner's Heart bid into a minor suit, precludes the probability of his holding three Hearts, so it is obvious that Declarant will obtain at least two Spade discards on the set-up Hearts in dummy, unless radical measures are taken at once.

The Spade reëntree must be taken out before the Ace of Clubs is forced out of South's hand or there is no hope for saving the game. The King of Spades was, therefore, led and the Declarant was compelled to try for one Spade discard on the Hearts. South ruffed the third round with a low trump and was over-ruffed by West, but the Queen of Spades could not be shut out and the contract was defeated by one trick. The lead of the King of Spades instead of a low Spade was the better play, because some partners refuse to make a sacrifice and with the Ace over them, might not have put up their Queen. Unless North held the Queen of Spades, there was nothing left but to resign.

CHAPTER FIFTY-FOUR

HANDS REQUIRING UNUSUAL TREATMENT

IN the ordinary course of play, three distinct types of hands appear sufficiently often to include all but a few of the so-called "freaks." First, there is the deal that is termed "a flat hand." Practically no play is required but to take in the winning tricks and concede the balance to the enemy. On these deals the novice and the expert are very likely to obtain precisely similar results. Occasionally, the expert, in snooping around for an extra trick that is not there, will fare a bit worse, but generally no material difference is apparent. The second type consists of deals where finesses must be taken, long suits set up and conventional strategy employed that will win tricks that do not show on the surface. The player who has advanced beyond the preliminary stage, should do as well with such hands as the long-experienced one.

It is on the third type of hands that the expert must count upon to make his gains. Hands that need exceptional treatment, seemingly at variance with the recognized conventions because plays that offer a fifty per cent chance for the game are refused and methods substituted that either win against any distribution, or yield an extra chance to do so. A finesse in a suit of normal length has no better than an even chance to win, but if the adversaries will kindly lead into the tenace, or be forced to do so by the Declarant's skilful manipulations,

then the doubtful game is profitably transformed into a sure game, an end devoutly desired.

Only on rare occasions is there anything better to do in the play of a No Trump hand, than to set up the long suit as quickly as possible. In the following tournament hand, accurate marking of the position of certain high cards enabled the Declarant to win a game that many players would lose:

	♠ A 3	
	♥ Q 9 2	
	♦ J 9 7 5 2	
	♣ 6 5 2	
♠ J 9 8 6 2		♠ K 7 5
♥ A 8 5 3		♥ 10 6 4
♦ K 4 3		♦ 10 8 6
♣ 10		♣ A 8 7 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	
	♠ Q 10 4	
	♥ K J 7	
	♦ A Q	
	♣ K Q J 9 3	

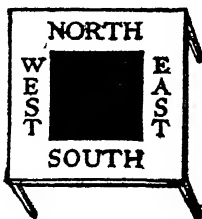
East dealt and passed, South bid a No Trump, which secured the contract without further bidding. The six of Spades was opened, won by the King and the second round was taken by the Ace. The Clubs were then led from dummy and the first round won by the Jack. It seems that the best play is to clear the Club suit, before the Queen of Spades is taken out of the hand, but a little

careful counting will prove that the soundest play calls for an immediate switch to the Hearts. East has passed originally and already has shown up with the King of Spades and the Ace of Clubs. If the Ace of Hearts were in his hand, the pass would have been ultra conservative, so that important card is doubtless with West. To remove the card of reëntry for the Spade suit, stands the best chance of winning the game. If West wins the King of Hearts and clears the Spades, the Declarant should set the Clubs and if East has a Spade remaining to lead, then the game is assured as the enemy have but two Spades and two side Aces to make. On the play, however, East is marked out of Spades and will probably lead a Diamond. The finesse must be refused, as with four Clubs, two Hearts, two Spades and one Diamond, the Declarant has the game before him. Should West hold off on the Hearts to preserve his card of reëntry, a second round should be led and if this, too, is refused, then the Clubs must be gone after. It is obvious that the game must be won, if the long suit is abandoned temporarily, the opposing card of reëntry abstracted and the finesse of the Diamond, a play that appears quite natural, is refused.

Sometimes the modern system of bidding, that refuses to bid No Trump with a short worthless suit when a good four-card suit is in the hand, makes it essential that the cards be played perfectly to win the game. On some specific hand, the game at No Trump may be easily made, but on the average, the approaching bid will show the best results:

♠ K 5 2
♥ 9 5 4
♦ A Q 9
♣ 10 9 7 3

♠ Q 9 6
 ♥ 10 8 6 2
 ♦ 10 3
 ♣ Q 8 6 4



♠ 10 8 4 3
♥ K 3
♦ K J 8 7 5 4
♣ 2

♠ A J 7
 ♥ A Q J 7
 ♦ 6 2
 ♣ A K J 5

On this deal, South as dealer, has the choice between three bids, Clubs, Hearts or No Trump. In actual play Hearts were bid and after passes by West and North, two Diamonds were bid by East, South doubled informatively and North bid two Hearts. Again it was a question whether North had not better bid two No Trumps—undoubtedly the preferable call at this point. If the No Trumps had been bid by North, it should be noted that the best strategical position would have been obtained by the original suit bid in preference to the No Trump. Played at Hearts, West opened the ten of Diamonds and the first play by dummy is of vital importance. If the Ace is played, the game is hopeless against perfect defense. Playing the Queen, which is taken by the King, makes it hard sledding for East. The Diamond return up to the tenace, is not to be thought of, so the singleton Club appears the best chance. South wins with the Ace.

puts dummy in with the King of Spades and takes the trump finesse. The Diamond gets dummy in for the second trump finesse—a play that South cannot know is unnecessary—and when the King is played Second Hand, the trumps are discontinued. Two rounds of Clubs puts West in with the Queen, and he plays the ten of Hearts, dropping the nine from dummy and the Ace from Declarant. Careful play has kept the high Club in dummy and that reëntree card permits the lead of the remaining Diamond, which is trumped with the seven and overtrumped by the eight. Now West is forced to lead up to the tenace in Spades and the game is won. If West, instead of the trump lead, had led the losing Club, the result would have been the same. South would have played the top Heart on dummy's trump lead, followed with the seven and the Spade situation would have been forced as before.

■

CHAPTER FIFTY-FIVE

THERE IS OFTEN SAFETY IN VALOR

PLAYS that call for outstanding adroitness occur at Bridge more often than the casual observer has any idea of. Many games may be won when the situation appears desperate, by exceptional play that is not tabulated under the various coups featured by the experts. Occasionally, a pretty play crops up that seems rather more of a lucky chance than a masterstroke and yet close study will show that the bold player usually has everything in his favor, with much to gain and little to lose. When brilliant play is made that succeeds in befuddling the enemy, it is just as useful as skilful play that forces a win against the adversaries perfect defense.

		♠ K 3	
		♥ 4 2	
		♣ J 10 9 5 2	
		♦ A K Q 9	
♠ Q J 9 2			♠ A 10 7 5
♥ K 10 8 5 3			♥ J 9 7
♦ 7 4			♦ 8 6 3 2
♣ K 6			♣ 8 3
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
		♠ 8 6 4	
		♥ A Q 6	
		♦ J 10 5	
		♣ A Q 7 4	

North dealt and bid a Diamond, which was passed by East and South's No Trump bid secured the contract. The opening lead was the five of Hearts and it would be interesting right here to write down the play of the cards to the first trick as the average player would probably play them. While there hardly seems opportunity for material variation, the winning or losing of the game was actually dependent upon the play to the first trick, always provided that the opposing defense did not go astray. Two factors are of vital importance on this deal. The location of the King of Clubs and the Ace of Spades. If East holds the missing Club honor, the game must be made without fail. Should the King be with West and the Ace of Spades be with East, then the game cannot be won, unless the defense errs. It would be obvious to West, when in the lead with the King of Clubs, that the Declarant has enough tricks in sight to assure the game, unless sufficient tricks in Spades can be made before the lead is relinquished. The switch to Spades would be imperative, unless West held the Ace himself, and to guard against such a lead, South plays a coup that, while daring and bold, is nevertheless practically sure to prove successful. Playing to the first trick, East's Jack of Hearts is won by the Ace instead of by the Queen. The ten of Diamonds is next led and the Queen played in dummy. Now the Jack of Clubs is finessed and on West winning with the King, the continuation of the Heart suit is marked. With the partner's Jack driving the Ace, it appears that the Queen is infallibly located with East and West has nothing better to do than lead a low Heart, fully expecting his partner to win with the Queen and save the game before the Declarant can reel off his winning tricks in Clubs and Diamonds. In the actual play

was prepared with a bid of two No Trumps, which secured the contract. The five of Diamonds was opened and on the eleven rule, the Declarant could count the six cards in sight, that must beat the five. The eight from dummy held the trick and the ten of Clubs was finessed to the King. South now switched to the two of Hearts and dummy's ten went to the Jack. North returned the low Spade, which was won by the King and South unhesitatingly again underled the Ace-King of Hearts. It was a hard position for the Declarant, but he took the finesse and was held to seven tricks, one short of his contract. While South's bold play made it rather difficult, the Declarant should have succeeded in fulfilling his contract. On the second Heart play, one of the high honors might easily have been with North and if the nine were in South's hand, the finesse would have won. The winning play would have been to refuse the finesse in Spades. South is pretty well marked with the King, and Declarant's best play would have been to play the Ace at once and then play the Queen of Diamonds. Holding the ten, South has nothing to lose by covering, but it is really immaterial what he does. After winning the Diamond trick, three rounds of Clubs squeezes a discard from South and any play other than a Heart will prove fatal to his hand. South is next forced in the lead with a Spade and after cashing in the two Hearts, he is compelled to lead away from the minor tenace in Diamonds.

CHAPTER FIFTY-SIX

PARTNERSHIP

MANY games are lost at Bridge that might have been easily saved, if the player were certain as to the location of a specific card or the distribution of one important suit. Quite often this knowledge is as marked as if all the cards were exposed face-upward on the table and still, probably because it necessitates a bit of reasoning, the chance for game is thrown away and the loss is charged to the "bad break." It is surprising what a simple expedient will, at times, make the difference between winning a doubled contract, or having a penalty inflicted.

The bidding of the following deal was so informative that little was left to the imagination. The Declarant was given credit for clever play in winning the game, instead of which the loss was directly due to bad play by the defense.

the King and led the Queen of Diamonds. If North foolishly covers, East will win with the Ace and a Spade return will defeat the contract, because West's ten of trumps cannot be prevented from making. South, however, read the situation and did not cover. The next Diamond lead was ruffed, the last opposing trump drawn and the Club finesse won the balance of the tricks. If East had overtaken the Queen of Diamonds, notwithstanding that such play establishes the King against him, the Declarant's good play would have been nullified and the contract defeated by one trick, when West ruffed the Spade. While such play would have proven a winner, it can hardly be called obligatory. East cannot be aware that his partner holds five Diamonds and that the second round of the suit will be ruffed. He has every reason to believe that he will hold the second round with the Ace and then the Spade ruff will set the contract for two hundred points.

The bad play is entirely due to West's poor vision. The situation should be as plain to him as A B C. His partner has shown two suits with a hand that is plainly marked with a minimum quick-trick holding. He assuredly cannot have less than five Diamonds and the second round of the suit will positively be trumped by the Declarant. To tempt East into taking the Diamond finesse is nothing less than suicide and West's proper play would have been the lead of his lowest Diamond. With the Queen-Jack-ten in West's hand, East naturally marks one of these cards in the hand of Declarant and cannot even consider a finesse. The Spade return is forced and the contract defeated without expecting the partner to be a second-sight performer.

A deal that required card counting of a much more difficult nature is the one following:

	♠ A K 3	
	♥ K J 9 6 4	
	♦ 10 2	
	♣ 9 7 5	
♠ Q J 10 8 5 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> NORTH EAST </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WEST SOUTH </div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> </div>	♠ 9 6
♥ Q 5		♥ A 10 7
♦ 9 6		♦ A Q 7 4
♣ Q J 8		♣ A K 3 2
	♠ 7 4	
	♥ 8 3 2	
	♦ K J 8 5 3	
	♣ 10 6 4	

On this deal North started with a Heart, East doubled, South passed, West bid a Spade, North passed and East went to No Trump. West rebid the Spades and there was no further bidding. With a Heart opening, the game would be easy for the Declarant, but the proper lead of the ten of Diamonds made it a battle of wits. It is apparent to the Declarant that if the enemy can get a Heart trick established before the trumps are cleared that the game cannot be won. The Ace of Diamonds is played to the first lead and the nine of Spades is led from dummy and won by North with the Ace. The false-card of the Ace, seemingly denying any card between the nine and the Ace in trumps, is the only way to inform the partner that if West should be out of Diamonds on the third

round, it will be useless to continue that suit as West can easily shut out a low trump. That West may have but two Diamonds is quite likely as South played the eight on the first round and the six fell from West. North must continue the two of Diamonds, both from the nature of his hand and the come-on card played by his partner, but he greatly desires his partner to return a Heart and not a Diamond, unless West must follow. The original bid by North marks him with two quick tricks. He cannot hold both the King-Queen of Hearts, or he would have opened that suit and so his false-card in Spades apparently marks him with at least the Queen of Clubs. If the trump lead had been won by the King, North might have held the Ace-King-eight-three, and then the Diamond play would surely have saved the game. To a careful card-reader, North's play is the best guide to his partner, that a Heart lead is imperative.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-SEVEN

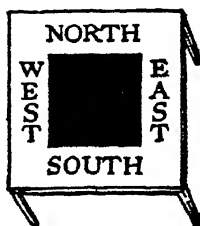
PROPER FINESSING

WHILE it is too much to expect that the so-called "good player" will play every hand perfectly, there are certain types of hands that a large number of above the average players will habitually play incorrectly. It is not bad play to misjudge a hand or to make a wrong guess, but when a play is made that cannot gain under any circumstances, regardless of the distribution of the cards, then it unquestionably is improper handling of the cards. Possibly the most flagrant mistake is made in leading incorrectly when attempting to take a finesse. Every player who has graduated from the beginner class, knows it is not good play to lead a Queen from his dummy to the Ace in his hand, unless the Jack is also with his holding. If the King is with Fourth Hand, it will win the trick, and if it is with Second Hand, the cover will compel the play of the Ace to win the trick, setting up the Jack for the adversaries. When, however, the combined hands hold the Ace-Queen-Jack, then many players believe that the lead of the honor is obligatory, especially when the dummy cannot again obtain the lead for a later finesse.

This situation is best illustrated in the play of the following deal:

♠ Q 6 3
 ♥ Q 9 7
 ♦ A 8 4
 ♣ Q 10 7 3

♠ 10 8 4
♥ J 8 2
♦ J 9 7 3
♣ J 9 5



♠ K 9
♥ A K 10 5
♦ 10 5 2
♣ 8 6 4 2

♠ A J 7 5 2
♥ 6 4 3
♦ K Q 6
♣ A K

East's Heart bid was overcalled by South with one Spade, which closed the bidding. Without the meagre four-card Heart bid by East, West would have opened the Diamonds and correct play by South would have scored a Small Slam. On the Jack of Hearts opening, three tricks were won in that suit and then East switched to the two of Clubs. The game hinges entirely upon the play of the trump suit. Dummy is put in with the Ace of Diamonds and if the Queen is led, East covers with the King and no power on earth can prevent West from winning a trick with the ten and saving the game. If a low Spade is led and the Jack finessed, the Ace on the second round will catch the King and the game must be won. It may seem to some players that this is placing the cards to prove the example, but the East and West cards

cannot be placed so that the game can be won on the Queen lead against good defense. If the King is singly guarded in the East hand, a low lead from dummy must win the game. Should the King be alone, the lead of the Queen will set up two adverse trump tricks. On any different distribution, a low trump lead will not gain, but neither can it lose a trick. Now, let us see what the probabilities are, that if the King is in the East hand, it is only once guarded. East is known to have held exactly four Hearts, and the lead of the two of Clubs shows four cards in that suit. With five cards remaining in Spades and Diamonds, it is practically an even chance that either suit is one of two cards. While the lead of a low Spade is the only proper play from North, it must be borne in mind that if either the North or South hands held the ten of Spades, that the best play would be the Queen, because now the King in East's hand can be caught, even if twice guarded, without the attendant danger of making good a third-round adverse trick.

One of the greatest helps to the Declarant in winning games, is to count the number of tricks he can take as soon as the dummy is put down. When the game can be won without difficulty, it is poor play to place it in jeopardy for an extra trick or two. If, however, the game is in doubt but the contract seemingly safe, then every chance should be taken to land the game.

-

♠ 8 6 3
♥ K 6 5 2
♦ A 8 7
♣ K J 9

♠ K J 5 2
♥ J 9 7 4
♦ K 10
♣ 8 5 3

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ Q 9
♥ Q 3
♦ J 9 6 5 3
♣ 10 7 4 2

♠ A 10 7 4
♥ A 10 8
♦ Q 4 2
♣ A Q 6

South obtained the contract for one No Trump, and the opening lead was the two of Spades. East's Queen was taken by the Ace and careful count shows that the Declarant can take in seven tricks. Three other possible tricks are in the hand if the "breaks" are right. If East's remaining Spade should be the King, Jack or nine, then the Declarant must win another Spade trick. Should the King of Diamonds be with East and the Hearts be divided evenly, then all the possibilities will materialize in tricks. As the cards lay, only one of the three chances were favorable, so it required something out of the ordinary to produce a game on this deal.

The first chance to try for is the even division of the Heart suit. This play must be gone after in a way to leave an opening for the enemy to make a mistake. A low Club is led and won in dummy with the Jack. Then a

low Heart is played and the ten finesse is taken. While South has little hope of winning this trick, East may be caught napping with the Queen and Jack of the suit. Unless the adversaries err, one trick in the suit must be lost, and West is the best place to put the lead. If a Diamond lead is obtained, one of the doubtful tricks goes on the credit side of the ledger. West went on with the Spades, trusting to find three of the suit with his partner and when this would not work out, he threw the lead with the last Spade. South then led the Ace of Hearts but the Queen falling from East, left little hope for the extra trick in Hearts. The Queen of Clubs was led next, dummy overtaking with the King and a low Diamond was played, trusting that if East held the King, he would hop up. When the King was not played Second Hand, the Declarant, marking West with eight cards in the major-suits could count him with five cards originally in Clubs and Diamonds. If West held the King of Diamonds once guarded, the game might be won. The Declarant ducked the Diamond and that play succeeded in making nine tricks for the game.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-EIGHT

FAITH AND FATE

THE intense yearning that most Bridge Players have, to obtain the play of the combined hands is more than passing strange. If this "Play it or Bust" germ were only indigenous to good players, it would not be so difficult to understand, but when players that usually lose a trick on every deal more than they should, bid cheerfully to three and four Clubs over the opponents No Trumps, and then bemoan their inability to play the hand correctly, I often wonder whether inoculation would not be in order. Another form of lunacy is that of the informatory doubler, who carries his partner's forced bid to the mauve limit and when the penalty of four or five hundred has been inflicted, remarks inanely, "Partner, if you had had a few tricks we would not have done so badly." Often, with one trick in the partner's hand, the opposing contract would have been doomed, but the play of the hand would have gone to the enemy and that contingency is not to be thought of.

When a player holds a Yarborough and an optimist for his partner, he rarely escapes as luckily as I did on the following deal:

		♠ A Q 10 4	
		♥ K Q 7 6	
		♦ K 10 7	
		♣ A Q	
♠ K J 7			♠ 6
♥ A J 10 4			♥ 9 5 3 2
♦ A Q 8			♦ J 9 5 3
♣ K J 10			♣ 8 7 5 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ 9 8 5 3 2	
		♥ 8	
		♦ 6 4 2	
		♣ 9 6 4 2	

West dealt and bid No Trump which North doubled. East passed and I was forced to bid two Spades on the South hand. West went to two No Trumps and North helped the Spades to three. East and South passed—and continued passing—but West blithely called three No Trumps and North bid four Spades. This last bid West apparently considered in the nature of a personal insult and doubled. North, little daunted, redoubled, although he admitted his intention was to drive West back to four No Trumps—which he wished to double. West, however, was not to be “driven,” and the contract was played at four Spades redoubled. Why North did not double the three No Trump bid will never be known! A penalty of at least 300 points was in sight while the Spade contract, even with the powerful hand held by North, was greatly dependent upon the distribution of South’s cards.

should be noted that South at no time had made a bid or entered into the festivities in any way. On the opening lead, West was in trouble at once, but the trick of Clubs was his choice finally. Dummy won with the Queen, took in the Ace and followed with the King of Hearts. West took it with the Ace and continued the suit. North played the six and South trumped and led the eight of trumps. West erred in not covering with the Jack, so the eight was finessed and, of course, held the trick. Now, a low Club was led and ruffed in dummy, putting up the nine in South's hand. The Queen of Hearts afforded a discard for a Diamond and the seven of Hearts was ruffed by South. Now the Diamond was put through and West played low, but the King went up and the suit was returned. This trick was taken by West but it was his last trick, as South trumped the third Diamond, holding the opposition down to two tricks—one each in Hearts and Diamonds. Fulfilling the contract and securing an additional trick was more creative than a double of three No Trumps, but that does not alter the fact as to what would have been the best procedure in the majority of cases.

While, unquestionably, many hands at Bridge are wholly dependent upon the play of the opponents for their success or failure, in the long run, sound play must win. Occasionally, there is an outstanding deal where different play scores hundreds of points. In a recent duplicate tournament, every table but one scored a Grand slam on a deal that seemed foolproof and still, at one able the slam was not only lost, but the contract of four odd was actually defeated.

	♠ Q		
	♥ 9 7 5 4 2		
	♦ 7		
	♣ K Q 10 9 8 3		
♠ J 8 5			♠ 4 2
♥ A 8 6			♥ K Q J 10 3
♦ A Q 10 9 5 2			♦ K J
♣ 7			♣ 6 5 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
	♠ A K 10 9 7 6 3		
	♥ —		
	♦ 8 6 4 3		
	♣ A J		

West dealt and bid a Diamond, North two Clubs, East two Hearts and South two Spades. At nearly every table the contract went to South at four Spades and the opening lead of the Ace of Hearts resulted in South taking in the entire 13 tricks. The Heart was trumped, dummy put in with the Queen of Spades, another Heart trumped and the opposing trumps taken out. The Clubs were next played, dummy overtaking the second round and the four Diamonds were discarded on the set-up Club suit. It all appeared so simple that at the table where the hand was defeated, the Declarant seemed to have slipped a cog. There was no variation in the bidding at this table, but West was one of those players who always "takes a look." Instead of opening the partner's Heart suit, he led the Ace of Diamonds—and that was one trick. With the lone Queen of Spades in the dummy, and three to the Jack in his hand, it was obvious that

continuing the Diamonds and forcing the dummy hand would set up the Jack, and thereby save all slams—and that proved sound reasoning for two tricks. When the Declarant tried to drop the Jack of Spades and found it wouldn't fall, he endeavored to obtain a Diamond discard on the Clubs, but West ruffed the second round and cashed in two more Diamonds—and that set the contract. It will be noted that the Declarant, even with the unfortunate break he got, might still have made eleven tricks if he had fully considered the bidding and the drop of the cards. Refusal to trump the second round of Diamonds would have produced this result.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE

THE DIVIDING LINE

MOST Bridge players are ready to admit, that when they lose two or three thousand points in a session of play that the cards are not behaving properly. The other fellow is holding everything! That there may be contributory misbehavior on the part of the player is rarely acknowledged. The difference between winning and losing is often the direct result of poor judgment in bidding or an error in play. There is something fundamentally wrong with the player who claims to always hold bad cards. "There ain't no such animal." For an evening or two, the cards may undoubtedly run against a player, but the tide will turn and success must reward the player who is able to minimize his losses and obtain the limit when the going is good. While it is granted that every "guess" cannot be right, especially in the course of the bidding, many players are handicapped by their inability to reason correctly. One of the most common faults of a certain class of players, is to bid two No Trumps when the partner has made an informatory double of the opponents' original one No Trump. Rarely is such a procedure a winning play. With sufficient high cards to warrant considering such a bid, it is usually far better to simply pass and permit the double to stand. If the enemy is able to extricate himself with a suit-bid, then is the time to think about what

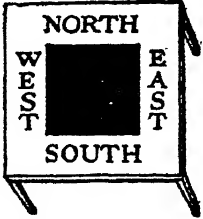
to do. There are few situations more ideal than permitting the adversary to play a No Trump at a hundred points penalty per trick, when two strong hands are against him. On the following hand, the dealer held a fair No Trump bid and his partner was able to stop two suits and yet, if the double had been left in, the contract could have been defeated for three or four hundred points.

		♠ A 3		
		♥ Q 6 4		
		♦ J 8 6 2		
		♣ Q J 9 2		
♠ 7 6				♠ Q 9 4
♥ J 8 5 2				♥ K 10 7
♦ K 7 4 3				♦ 10 9 5
♣ 8 6 5				♣ A K 7 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST [REDACTED] EAST SOUTH </div>			
		♠ K J 10 8 5 2		
		♥ A 9 3		
		♦ A Q		
		♣ 10 4		

East dealt and bid a No Trump, South doubled, West passed and North bid two Clubs. It should be noted that, although South has but the minimum strength for an informatory double, North's holding is so strong and the distribution so well balanced, that a pass would have produced lucrative penalties. Of course, East was well pleased with the Club bid, but South went to two Spades and obtained the contract. The first lead was the three

of Diamonds, and even with this advantageous opening, South was not able to score game on the deal. Usually, with the hand held by West, a Heart opening should be given the preference, but South's original double marked him with strength in the major suits, which accounted for West's choice of the Diamond lead. Winning the first trick with the Queen, South took three rounds of trumps, finessing against the Queen in East's hand. Next the Ace of Diamonds was cashed in and the ten of Clubs led. East won with the King and led the Ace, before returning the Diamond. South trumped the Diamond and led a low Heart, but West cleverly put in the eight and this prevented the Declarant from making more than one Heart trick. If West had played a low Heart, dummy would also have ducked and East would have been forced to either lead away from the King of Hearts or permit the Clubs in dummy to make. The entire play was a battle of position between the Declarant and adversaries one trying to force East to lead a Heart and the other endeavoring to prevent it. Careful study will show that after the opening lead, the Declarant could have made the game against any defense without trying for the impossible. There was no vital need to take out the trumps in such great hurry, as the Ace of Spades was the one sure reentry for the Clubs. The second lead should have been the ten of Clubs and East can make no return that will take out the Ace of Spades before Club is set-up to afford a discard for one of the Hearts. Only one Club trick was necessary to score the game on this deal, after the Diamond opening.

One of the best examples of what can happen when a player makes improper informatory doubles, is illustrated in the following deal:

	♠ K J 9 3	
	♥ A Q 9 2	
	♦ A 9 7 4	
	♣ J	
♠ Q 10 6 2		♠ 7 4
♥ K J 7 5		♥ 8 6 4
♦ K 10 8 6		♦ 5 3
♣ 7		♣ 10 8 6 5 3 2
	♠ A 8 5	
	♥ 10 3	
	♦ Q J 2	
	♣ A K Q 9 4	

South had the deal and bid a Club, which West doubled. Many players will double on this style of hand, because they can support both major suits. There is no excuse for such a double, because the quick trick value for an informatory double is two and a half tricks. This hand contains just half of the necessary requirements. North redoubled and East passed. The redouble relieved East of the necessity of bidding, but in any event, if West had a sound double, the contract should be difficult to make. South passed and West also passed foolishly—although any bid he could make would have been doubled by North. The two of Spades was the opening lead, which was taken with the eight and the ten of Hearts led. West covered with the Jack and dummy won with the Queen. The Jack of Clubs took the next trick and a Spade lead was won by the Ace. The Ace of Clubs

showed the balance of the trumps with East. Another Spade lead was ruffed by East and he had nothing left to do but lead the five of Diamonds. South played the Queen, West the King and dummy won with the Ace and returned the suit. South won with the Jack and another Heart was put through and the nine finessed. The Ace of Hearts permitted the Declarant to discard his losing Diamond and East was forced to trump the eleventh trick, permitting South to gobble up all his remaining trumps, the Declarant making a Small Slam on his contract of one Club Redoubled.

CHAPTER SIXTY

PERCEPTION

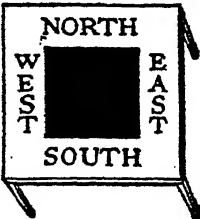
TIME and again we hear at the Bridge table, "Partner, if I could only have known that you held the King of something, we might have saved the game." Granting that the player could not know, why not play on the presumption that the card is there nevertheless? This is especially so when it is the one chance to save the game, or when any alternative play is equally doubtful. It is surprising how many of the apparently brilliant plays of the experts are based on this principle of finding the pivotal card in the wished for place. Very often a moment's forethought will show conclusively that the game must be lost, unless what appears to be natural play is abandoned, and less orthodox methods are adopted. The following deal is a simple illustration:

		♠ Q 9 6	
		♥ A J 3	
		♦ K J 7 4	
		♣ Q 7 2	
♠ 8 7 4 3			♠ A K J 10 2
♥ K 8 7 5 2			♥ Q 10 6
♦ 9 5			♦ 8 3
♣ K 3			♣ 8 5 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ 5	
		♥ 9 4	
		♦ A Q 10 6 2	
		♣ A J 10 9 6	

East dealt and bid a Spade, South two Diamonds, West two Spades, North three Diamonds, East three Spades and South four Clubs. With two suits practically even in high-card strength and distribution, it is usually good tactics to show both. It warns the partner against doubling the adversaries make and is the type of hand that if overbid and doubled, will probably yield a trick more than a more evenly balanced hand. West continued to four Spades and North "went out on a limb" to the extent of five Diamonds. From the bidding it appeared that South might be void of Spades and the game in Diamonds appeared an even chance, while the enemy had the same chance at Spades. It is on these close deals that the large swings are made and judgment is a more powerful factor than luck. East held too many losing cards to bid any higher, but West doubled and the co

tract was played at five Diamonds doubled. The opening lead was the three of Spades, which East won with the ten and the King was then led and ruffed by the Declarant. Two rounds of trumps left dummy in the lead and the Queen of Clubs finesse was lost to the King. West now shifted to the five of Hearts, but the Ace went up and dummy obtained discards of the two losing Hearts on the set-up Club suit, enabling the Declarant to fulfill his doubled contract. If East had paused to count, after winning the first trick, he could have seen that there was but one way to defeat the contract. West has twice supported the Spades and the lead of the three, with the two in sight, shows exactly four in suit. South must, therefore, hold a singleton Spade. The bidding marks South with at least ten cards in Clubs and Diamonds and possibly more. The Diamonds, with the King-Jack in dummy, must be solid and the Clubs either solid or within one trick of establishment. If the Clubs are headed by the Ace-King, the game cannot be saved, or if the King of Hearts is with South the case is hopeless. To save the game, West must hold the King of Hearts and a stopper in Clubs. As a matter of fact, unless both of these cards are in West's hand, his two assisting bids must have been based on thin air. East, at the second trick, in lieu of continuing the seemingly sound Spade lead, should at once switch to the Hearts and the contract must be defeated for a hundred points, instead of permitting the adversaries to make their doubled contract.

Occasionally it is even too late to wait until the second trick to bring perception into play.

	♠ A 8	
	♥ Q 3 2	
	♦ Q J 3	
	♣ K J 10 9 4	
♠ J 10 9 5 4 3		♠ 6 2
♥ —		♥ A 9 6 5 4
♦ A 7 6		♦ K 5 4
♣ 8 7 6 2		♣ Q 5 3
	♠ K Q 7	
	♥ K J 10 8 7	
	♦ 10 9 8 2	
	♣ A	

On this hand, South had the deal and bid a Heart, West bid a Spade and the contract was eventually landed on South at four Hearts, which East doubled. The Jack of Spades was opened and won with the Ace. It looked like smooth sailing for game, until South won the next trick with the ten of Hearts and West showed out. The seven of Hearts was continued, East winning with the Ace and returning the Spade. Of course, South found it impossible to obtain the lead in dummy to finesse against the nine of Hearts and the contract was defeated one trick. While it was bad luck to find five Hearts massed in one hand against him, the Declarant had nothing to lose and everything to gain by winning the first trick in his hand. The ten of Hearts should be led next and East would probably refuse to win it. A low Heart would follow and the Queen would be won by the Ace. Now

dummy must get in with the Ace of Spades and the Heart finesse holds the enemy down to one Heart trick and the two high Diamonds.

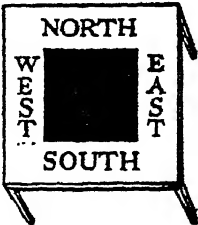
Played at double-dummy—all the cards being exposed—East could defeat the contract by returning a low Club, instead of the Spade. South must win with the singleton Ace, put dummy in with the Spade and finesse the trumps. On the Diamond lead West could play the Ace second-hand and return the Club. This method of play would set-up a Club in East's hand before South could get the Diamonds established, but in actual play, the Club lead would hardly seem propitious.

CHAPTER SIXTY-ONE

ALIBIS

IT is a thankless task to dwell on the lost games that might have been won if the player were able to accurately locate the one vital card. When it is altogether a matter of guess-work, one player's guess is as good as another's, although strangely enough, the dummies and kibitzers are always a hundred percent correct, usually after the play is over. Very often in the course of play, the Declarant is given the choice between two methods of procedure. When the situation is such that one method may either win or lose the game and the other cannot win, even though it may not lose, then the player should be charged with bad play when he goes wrong.

In a match game the Declarant was forced to choose between two finesses that apparently were precisely of equal chance. It so happened that, as the cards lay, the finesse chosen unfortunately set the contract two tricks, while the finesse in the other suit would have won the game.

		♠ 8 7 5 4	
		♥ J 10	
		♦ A Q J 8 6	
		♣ A Q	
♠ 3			♠ A K J 10
♥ 8 6 4 2			♥ 7 3
♦ K 7 2			♦ 10 9 4
♣ J 7 5 3 2			♣ K 10 8 4
			
		♠ Q 9 6 2	
		♥ A K Q 9 5	
		♦ 5 3	
		♣ 9 6	

North dealt and bid a Diamond, East a Spade and South two Hearts. West and North passed, but East, with the big honor score, bid another Spade and South bought the contract with a bid of three Hearts. West opened the Spade, East winning with the King and Ace. The third round was covered by the Queen, West trumping and leading a low Club. The finesse of the Queen went to the King and the high Spade taken in. The Club was then led and won with the Ace. Three rounds of trumps gathered up the enemies' holdings and the Diamond finesse proved a winner, but as South was unable to get back in his hand for a second finesse, another trick in that suit was sacrificed to loose play. The Declarant's alibi—that he had the same chance on the Club finesse as on the Diamond—was seemingly true, but he lost

sight of the important fact that the Club finesse, even if successful, would not in itself win the game, or even fulfill the contract, unless the King of Diamonds was also with West. If the Diamond King was with West then the Club finesse was unnecessary and uncalled for. If West had held the King of Clubs the chances greatly favored his holding the King of Diamonds also, because his preferred lead would have the suit that he did not hold the King of, unless he held both Kings. If South had properly refused the Club finesse and gone up with the Ace at once, then he should have led the Heart and overtaken it in his hand. The second round of Hearts should not have been led until the Diamond finesse was tried, so that the second Heart will permit South to re-enter and take out the opposing trumps before the next round of Diamonds is played. This method of play would have netted ten tricks, as the losing Spade and Club could have been discarded on the set-up Diamonds.

An alibi that is so often in evidence is when a player overbids his hand and endeavors to mitigate his offense with the remark: "Well, partner, we saved the game and they had a big honor score." If the game really would have been lost, the flag-flying might be justifiable, but on the following hand, a penalty of four hundred points should have been inflicted instead of a hundred taken:

	♠ —		
	♥ A 6 3 2		
	♦ Q 5 4		
	♣ A K 9 8 6 2		
♠ 9 8 7 6 3	NORTH	♠ K Q J 10 2	
♥ J 4	WEST	♥ K Q 10 9	
♦ 10 9 3		♦ K 7	
♣ Q 5 4		♣ J 10	
	SOUTH		
	♠ A 5 4		
	♥ 8 7 5		
	♦ A J 8 6 2		
	♣ 7 3		

North bid a Club, East a Spade, South two Diamonds and the bidding went merrily on until South obtained the contract at six Diamonds doubled. If South had passed the five Spade bid, North would doubtless have doubled, although the six Diamond bid would not have been so bad with North's holding. At Spades, East would have been set four tricks against good defensive play. South's play of the deal appeared rather snappy. The Spade was opened and won with the Ace and a low Spade ruffed in dummy. The Ace, King and a low Club followed, South trumping the third round and leading his last Spade for dummy to ruff. The Queen of Diamonds was then led, covered by the King and won with the Ace. The Jack of Diamonds took all the opposing trumps but the ten, which was now the ranking card. A Heart lead followed and one discard of a Heart was obtained

on the Club while West trumped with the ten of Diamonds. The Declarant's elation at being set only one trick was rather out of place. It was quite possible to have made the doubled contract by two methods of play. After the King of Diamonds was caught, three rounds of trumps should have been played, putting West in with the last trump, so that he could not interrupt the run of the Club suit when dummy was in with the Ace of Hearts.

Possibly a better way to play the deal would have been not to ruff out the Spades at all, but set up the long suit in dummy. After the first trick is won with the Ace of Spades, dummy is put in with the Club and a low Diamond is led and the Jack finessed. The Ace catches the King and the Queen wins the third round. Now, the Ace, followed by a low Club which South ruffs, sets the suit and the Ace of Hearts is the card of reëntry to obtain three needful discards.

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CHAPTER SIXTY-TWO

NE PLUS ULTRA

EVEN though the bidding strategy at Auction Bridge has been greatly improved in the past few years, it is still practically impossible to play every deal at the best make for the combined playing hands. Many hands that would win the game at No Trump are played at a suit contract and fall one trick short, while possibly a greater number fail at No Trump, when the suit make would have been a certain game. Good judgment in bidding is a wonderful asset, but the best logic in the world cannot prevail against card distribution that is a bit contrary. A player may hold the Queen-ten-nine of a suit bid by an adversary, together with excellent side cards for a No Trump. The contract is obtained for one No Trump, but the leader's bid consists of a six-card suit to the Ace-Jack with a side Ace. The King happens to be with the partner of the leader and the contract is defeated for one trick. Instead of a No Trump bid, a plebeian Club might easily have landed the game. If the suit bid had happened to consist of the Ace and King, then the No Trump would have won the game, while the Club bid might have been inadequate.

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This phase of the game will never be completely eliminated and indeed, with many players, is its chief charm. It is surprising the number of these hands that

appear to be misfits, that can be made to respond to persuasive treatment by the expert player.

The following deal will play for ten tricks at No Trumps against any defense, but at the logical Diamond make, it hardly seems that game can be secured, except by supernormal vision:

		♠ 7 5 2	
		♥ Q 10 5	
		♦ J 3	
		♣ A K Q 9 6	
♠ Q 9			♠ K J 10 8
♥ J 6 3			♥ A K 9 8 7 2
♦ 9 5 2			♦ 8 4
♣ J 10 5 4 2			♣ 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 6 4 3	
		♥ 4	
		♦ A K Q 10 7 6	
		♣ 8 3	

North dealt and bid a Club, East a Heart, South two Diamonds, West and North passed and East now ventured two Spades. This last bid can hardly be called sound, but many good players consider it justifiable in similar circumstances. The bid of a higher ranking suit, after a suit of lower rank, indicates a strong preference for the first named suit. If the partner holds three small cards of each suit, he should go back to the first suit. With two cards in the first suit and four in the second, he should, of course, permit the second suit to stand or

even advance it, if possible. West's cards, on this deal were not worth an assist, but he would have gone back to Hearts if South had passed. South, however, bid three Diamonds and after two passes, East went to three Hearts. South continued to four Diamonds and the bidding stopped. The play of this deal brought out a number of exceptional points. On natural play it appears that South should make his contract of ten tricks, but no more, one Heart and two Spades going to the enemy. The opening lead was the Jack of Hearts and although dummy holds a perfect fourchette in the Queen-ten, he, nevertheless, refuses to cover. While the cover would establish the ten on the third round, if East continued the suit, it is apparent that the Hearts will never be played again except by West. The Spades will be East's next lead without question, and to prevent this switch, West is permitted to win with the Jack. The second Heart lead is trumped and three rounds of Diamonds takes all the opposing trumps. On the third round of Diamonds, dummy discards a Spade and East a Heart. The eight of Clubs is led next, West and North playing low and the eight holding the trick. For West to cover would be making it easy for the Declarant, as the finesse would then be marked on the second round. That the eight of Clubs will be finessed seems most unlikely and the reason for the play is an unusual one. From the bidding, East is marked with at least ten cards in Hearts and Spades. Having followed twice to the Diamonds, he cannot hold more than one Club. It appears certain that the Club suit will not break and South is quite ready to lose one trick in Clubs so that he can bring in the balance and discard the three losing Spades. When the eight of Clubs stood up, South was as much surprised

as anyone, but not too surprised to take further advantage of the situation and score a Small Slam by the aid of the plainly marked double-squeeze. South led the two remaining Diamonds. On the first, West discarded his last Heart and dummy threw a Spade. On the last trump West was in difficulties. That a Club discard would be fatal was obvious, so the nine of Spades was disgorged, North now letting go the nine of Clubs. Up to this point East was in no distress, but the Clubs came next in solid array and on the third round East was left with the Ace of Hearts and the King-Jack of Spades. Dummy held the Queen of Hearts and the low Spade, and South held the Ace-six and four of Spades. If the Heart was shed, the Queen in dummy would make, and the Spade discard set up the suit with South, West's guard in Spades having already been squeezed out to protect the Clubs. There was absolutely no escape from the position and the Small Slam scored by the Declarant tended to prove that the best make for the combined hands is not always the one where the greatest number of tricks appear on the surface. Occasionally, tricks at Bridge, like icebergs, are largely submerged.

CHAPTER SIXTY-THREE

RESTRAINT

IT requires considerable fortitude to refrain from doubling a contract that seems to be doomed to certain defeat. There are two principal reasons when such procedure is very bad strategy. If the adversaries are bidding two suits, and the double may drive them into their second suit which the player cannot double, nor has good reason to believe that his partner can, then to double the first suit is unwise. Again, when a double tends to mark the location of certain essential honors, it is unquestionably poor tactics to disclose such valuable information.

To double a contract of four Spades, with a holding of four to the Jack and the partner having bid two suits, appears almost obligatory. I have seen this very thing occur twice in one evening and both times it resulted in the loss of a game that would otherwise have been saved. Against sharp players, it is unsound to permit the correct inferential deduction—that a double could only be made on trump strength and induce a deep finesse that would not be considered under ordinary circumstances. Defeating a contract of four Spades, undoubled, is infinitely more pleasurable to most players than permitting the enemy to succeed in making it, even though it is doubled. At the American Whist League Congress in Chicago, I held the South hand on the following deal.

in honors. Holding a freak hand with an eight-card solid suit, East should have bid five Diamonds, regardless of partners, opponents, doubles or church affiliations. Played at Spades, a penalty of four tricks will be registered, if the King of Hearts is opened, taken by the Ace and the Spade lead is won by the Ace. Before returning the Heart, South gathers in the Ace of Clubs and discards the three remaining Clubs on North's solid Hearts. The two of Clubs does not appear until the last round of Hearts, but when it does show up, the echo is disclosed and the Club ruff is obtained. This vision of a delectable penalty was rudely dispelled by West's clever play. Quite imperturbably he proceeded to fulfill his contract! My six luscious trumps were treated with contumely and disrespect. The play that made the hand was West's refusal to win the opening lead of the King of Hearts. The second round was taken by the Ace and the trump lead now put me in without a Heart left to return. I tried to kill the Diamond suit by leading my singleton, but the suit was continued and the second round ruffed and over-ruffed. After the trumps were drawn, the Queen of Clubs was led and East did not fail to overtake it in the dummy with the King. Such an oversight would have given me an opening by holding off with the Ace until the second round and then making the balance of the tricks, as two Clubs had been discarded by dummy on the trump leads. As the deal was played, the Declarant lost but three tricks, one each in Hearts, Spades and Clubs. And, to cap the climax, West complimented me on my excellent judgment in refusing the double!

A deal where one careless play made the difference between winning the game and having the contract defeated, was the following:

	♠ J 8	
	♥ 8 7 4	
	♦ 9 2	
	♣ K 9 7 5 3 2	
♠ Q 10 9 5 2	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>	♠ A K 6 3
♥ K J 6		♥ 9 5 3 2
♦ A Q 7		♦ 8 5 4
♣ J 4		♣ Q 8
	♠ 7 4	
	♥ A Q 10	
	♦ K J 10 6 3	
	♣ A 10 6	

East dealt and bid a Spade, South two Diamonds and West jumped to three Spades, which closed the Auction. South opened the seven of trumps, one of the rare instances where a trump lead up to the maker is justifiable. The bidding would indicate that the lead cannot kill a trump trick in the partner's hand, which is the main deterrent in this type of hand. The Declarant won with the King, played the Ace and led a Diamond, finessing the Queen. A Club was then led to throw the lead and the next play cleared a Diamond trick for South. Another Club lead permitted the enemy to cash in a trick in Clubs and one in Diamonds. Now the ten of Hearts put dummy in with the Jack and forced a lead away from the minor tenace, defeating the contract by one trick. Correct play by East would have been good for ten tricks. His one object should have been to conserve

all possible cards of reëntry in his hand. The first trump trick should have been won by the Queen in dummy and the second by the King—dummy leading the nine. Now a Heart lead will be won by the Jack, unless South clatters up with the Ace, but East has two cards of reëntry in the six and three of Spades, over the five and two in dummy. These cards of entry are absolutely essential to again finesse the Heart and to obtain the lead to cash in the thirteenth Heart and discard the losing Diamond in dummy. The Diamond finesse is the last thing to do, if the enemy have not already broached that suit after making their two tricks in Clubs.

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CHAPTER SIXTY-FOUR

THE CRITIC

THE Bridge Millennium will have arrived when the game is played without criticism and without mannerisms. More pleasurable evenings have been totally ruined by criticism at the Bridge table than by the seven sins of Satan. I am not laboring under any delusion that anything I may write will tend to better the situation to any great extent, but it might be of some interest to try and delve into the cause of this onerous question.

Undoubtedly the most flagrant cases occur when husband and wife are playing together and one or the other plays a better game—or, believes so, which amounts to the same thing. That each is trying their level best is granted and still the least slip, or even an unfortunate guess, brings forth a torrent of abuse that makes it uncomfortable for the other players. It seems a bit like the story of the professional runner, who was being chased by a bear. His comrade, safely up a tree, shouted encouragingly, "Run! Run!" The distressed one gasped indignantly, "Hell, d'ye think I am throwing the race?"

It is a fact that many married couples do not play Bridge together at all because they are unable to refrain from criticizing one another at the card-table. It seems to me that the fault is mainly due to the intense desire for

success when playing together. There is a certain pride that each has in the other—however successfully disguised—and failure to live up to expectations is doubly vexatious. When the lady concededly plays the better game of the two, the squalls are apt to be less frequent, because recognizing his limitations, the man will not be so quick to enter the fray. And without the ready “come-back” there is little chance for discord. When a woman sweetly asks her husband: “Darling, why didn’t you return my suit and save the game?”, it should be understood that the “Darling” is wholly what might be called “informatory.” An informatory darling, like an informatory double, has a sort of reverse meaning. It is needless to give the proper interpretation—every husband knows. If the husband thinks he is the better player—it is never conceded—then trouble is rife. He inquires, “Sweetheart, (informatory) was it necessary that you trump my perfectly good Heart?” The question; The answer; The retort. And the battle!

The most prolific cause of contentiousness is unjust criticism. Some players delight in finding fault with their partners when an unfortunate hand might have been successful with double-dummy play. To rag a partner under such circumstances is most unfair and uncalled for. Often a deal is played where different treatment would seem to have been productive of much more successful results and yet when the play is carefully diagnosed, the actual play turns out to have been easily the best.

A neat example is illustrated by the following deal:

	♠ 10 8 5	
	♥ J 6 5	
	♦ Q 9 2	
	♣ Q 7 5 3	
♠ 4 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ 9
♥ 7 4 2		♥ A K Q 10 8
♦ 6 5 3		♦ K J 10 7 4
♣ A K 10 8 6		♣ 9 2
	♠ A K Q J 7 6 2	
	♥ 9 3	
	♦ A 8	
	♣ J 4	

West dealt and bid a Club, North passed, East bid a Heart and South a Spade. On the second round West and North passed, East rebid the Hearts and South went to two Spades. East was correct in rebidding his strong Heart suit before showing the Diamonds. It should be noted that if South had preempted the bid with four Spades, that East would not have been silenced. With his powerful holding, the game seems assured after the partner's original bid. As a matter of fact, East can take eleven tricks at either Hearts or Diamonds, if he plays properly. Preemptive bids are rarely of value, after the adversaries have shown a suit. On the next round East bid three Diamonds and South went to three Spades. After West and North passed, East called four Diamonds and West should have gone back to the Hearts, provided

South passed. After his original bid, West has not a sound assist or a rebid, but he has a choice after his partner's two suit showing. South, however, bid four Spades, which was doubled by East and all hands passed. West opened the King of Clubs, upon which East played the nine and the Ace of Clubs was the next lead. When East completed the echo, the leader hesitated quite some time, but finally decided to switch to the Hearts. East won with the Queen and continued with the suit until South trumped the third round and took the balance of the tricks. The dummy took the lead with the second round of trumps and South obtained a discard of the eight of Diamonds on the Queen of Clubs. Notwithstanding that the contract was defeated for one trick, East was volubly critical of the partner's play: "I cannot see why you persisted in setting up the Club so that South could obtain a discard of the Diamond."

"If you didn't want me to continue the Clubs," replied West, "why did you play the nine on the King?"

"Because you might have been bidding a four-card Club suit, in which case I could have trumped the third round."

"That's true," responded West, "but you bid two suits and might have held but one Club, in which event you could still have made a trump on the third round of the Clubs."

"Well," retorted East, "after you saw the situation, why not kill the high Club in dummy by permitting me to trump it? Even though I am overruffed, it would do no harm. It was inexcusable play to permit him to discard that Diamond."

The "him" referred to being your humble writer, "Mr. and Mrs." were offered the boon of replaying the hand

as suggested by "Mr." On the third round of Clubs, the Queen in dummy was not "killed" because she made no attempt to win the third round of the suit. The ten of Clubs was trumped Fourth Hand and dummy put in on the second round of trumps. Now a Heart was discarded on the Queen of Clubs and the remaining trump put South in the lead to run down all the trumps. At the tenth trick, East was forced to discard, with four cards remaining—the Ace-King of Hearts and the King-Jack of Diamonds. Of course, a Heart must be discarded and he is stuck in with the remaining Heart and compelled to lead away from the Diamond tenace. Instead of winning an extra trick, the line of play suggested by East permitted Declarant to fulfill his doubled contract. And the informatory "Darling" was properly squelched!

CHAPTER SIXTY-FIVE

PITFALLS

WHILE it is not always possible to escape the snares and pitfalls laid by shrewd players, it is surprising how often careful deductions will circumvent play that is intended to deceive. Persistent play of false-cards and shift bids are not indulged in by the better players, because such play is more apt to fool the partner than the adversary and has a tendency for loss of confidence when it is most needed. Occasionally, sharp players lay traps to catch the unwary and when such play cannot deceive the partner, then it is undoubtedly good strategy. On the following hand, of quite normal distribution, it hardly seems possible that a swing of six tricks depended upon the ability to "read the cards."

♠ 8 5 3
♥ 10 5
♦ 9 7 4
♣ A J 9 6 2

♠ Q 10		♠ J 7 6 2
♥ Q 9 2		♥ J 7 6 3
♦ J 8 5 3		♦ A Q 6
♣ 8 5 4 3		♣ Q 10

♠ A K 9 4
♥ A K 8 4
♦ K 10 2
♣ K 7

After three passes, South secured the contract with a bid of one No Trump. Having the four suits stopped, obviates the need of an approaching four-card suit bid. The three of Diamonds was the opening lead, upon which East played the Queen and South won with the King. East's play of the Queen instead of the Ace, seems like poor play, commonly termed "finessing against partner." When there is no finesse against the dummy, it is usually sound tactics for Third-Hand to go up with the highest card. There are exceptions, however, to all rules and in this instance the play of the Queen was the proper play. If West held six Diamonds, South could hold out one, which might be the King. If this were the case, East's refusal to play the Ace could lose six tricks. That West cannot hold more than five Diamonds is shown by the lead of the three. The correct fourth-heat lead marks him with either four or five in suit. He must hold three higher than the card led, and can hold but one lower—the missing two. Hence, South holds at least two Diamonds and if one is the King, it cannot be prevented from winning a trick. East's object in playing the Queen in lieu of the Ace—it is always poor play to depart from the rules without a good reason—is to get out South's winner, if he has one, while East still has a card of the suit to return to his partner. If the Ace was played to the first trick, South would refuse to play the King until the third round, thus preventing West from making the "long" card of his suit unless he holds a card for reëntry. That South may accomplish the same object by refusing to win the Queen with the King, is quite true, but South cannot tell which of his opponents holds the Ace of Diamonds. He would appear foolish if West held the Ace-Jack, as seems probable, and won every trick

in the suit. When South wins the first trick, he can count seven tricks in sight and unless the Club suit can be brought in, the game is impossible. The King of Clubs was led and Fourth Hand, without apparent thought, played the Queen. East shrewdly reasoned that with the ten falling from his hand, the Declarant must mark him with the Queen, or no more, as both the Jack and nine are in the dummy. Opening the bidding Fourth Hand, South must hold powerful cards and if he can bring in the Club suit, there is little hope of saving the game. If he needs three tricks in dummy, as he actually does, the fall of the Queen under the King apparently marks the ten with West. If South held four Clubs, then he need not finesse the nine, but in that event, he would not finesse, if the ten instead of the Queen were played. If he held either two or three Clubs, then the finesse is essential if West holds the ten. As the cards lie, the play of the Queen appears to be the better chance. I was playing the South hand and would not have finessed if the ten had been played, so East's play could not have incurred any loss, but neither did it gain, as I went up with the Jack and caught the ten. Before playing the second round of Clubs, the King of Hearts was played. East had to find three discards on the Clubs, without information from his partner, who followed suit four times, so East discarded the Spades, as the Heart suit appeared to be with South. This permitted South to take in twelve tricks for a Small Slam. The only reason East's strategy proved unsuccessful, was because West's hand was open to a perfect count. If East held the lone Queen of Clubs, then West must have held five. With five Clubs, he would not have opened a four-card Diamond suit, as was shown by his lead of the three, with the two in South's hand.

East is palpably marked with another Club, which must be the ten when he discards the Queen.

Sometimes a "trap-bid" may be used to good advantage.

		♠ 7	
		♥ A K 6 4 2	
		♦ A 6 5	
		♣ J 10 8 4	
♠ 6 3			♠ A K J 8 5
♥ Q 10 8			♥ 7
♦ J 9 8 7 2			♦ K Q 10 4
♣ 6 5 3			♣ K Q 9
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ Q 10 9 4 2	
		♥ J 9 5 3	
		♦ 3	
		♣ A 7 2	

North dealt and bid a Heart, East doubled, South bid three Hearts, West and North passed and East bid three Spades. This was doubled by South and all hands passed. South's jump-bid was somewhat in the nature of a camouflage, as he had excellent Spade support. With the informatory double by East, the game seemed doubtful, so South tried for penalties. Unless West has a sound minor-suit bid, that he can venture four on, the bid will doubtless be passed up to East. If East has an original Spade bid and refuses to be silenced by a shut-out, then South is in good position for a business double. Should

North have an exceptional Heart holding, he can still go on and probably land the game. Played at Spades, the contract was defeated for 300 points, while North could not make over three odd at Hearts against perfect defence. If East had bid one Spade over the original Heart, he would not have gotten into such trouble, but many players feel they are compelled to double when holding a hand with high cards in three suits.

CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX

MATCH PLAY

UNDOUBTEDLY the most satisfactory contest at Bridge is a team of four match, in duplicate. All the North and South hands are played by two members of a team and the East and West hands by the remaining partners. The factor of Luck in holding high cards is completely eliminated and perfect play by the opposing pair will register no gain unless the other team is incapable of producing equally skilful results, on the replay.

It is quite different in duplicate pair contests, as the opportunity to play a hand requiring exceptional skill, does not materialize both ways of the table and the chance to equalize the adversaries' good play is lost. When a series of deals lend themselves to pretty strategy, then the game is well worth playing. In a recent match, two outstanding deals were played that showed a difference of almost 800 points.

		♠ A 10 4 3	
		♥ Q 6	
		♦ A Q 7 2	
		♣ K 6 3	
♠ K J 9 6 2			♠ Q 5
♥ 8 3			♥ K 4 2
♦ 10 6 5 4			♦ K J 9
♣ 7 4			♣ A Q J 10 8
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ 8 7	
		♥ A J 10 9 7 5	
		♦ 8 3	
		♣ 9 5 2	

At the first table North had the deal and bid a No Trump, East doubled, South bid two Hearts and West two Spades. North passed the Spades but East bid three Clubs, and South continued to three Hearts, which passed around to East, who doubled. The seven of Clubs was opened and won by the ten. The Queen of Spades was returned, taken by the Ace and the Heart finesse gathered in three tricks in that suit. The Diamond finesse, however, was not so successful and East won with the King. The five of Spades put West in to lead another Club and the contract was defeated one trick. At the second table, the bidding was precisely similar, except for one point. North, a player of unbounded optimism and much faith in his partner's playing ability, redoubled. If the enemy went to three Spades or four Clubs, he was ready to double either contract. However,

the redouble was permitted to stand and the seven of Clubs was opened as before, won by the ten and the Queen of Spades returned. As the cards lay, three rounds of Clubs would have permitted West to ruff, but in actual play, East could not tell the exact number of Clubs held by his partner. At both tables, South played the five Clubs on the first trick and, if West held the four and two, the King in North's hand would afford a valuable discard. At any rate, if South held three Clubs, it did not seem that he could escape losing them sooner or later. On the second lead—the Queen of Spades—South had his opportunity for a clever play. If East held two Spades, the contract seems in fine technical position to be made. True, it required looking ahead several moves, but a bit of chess is often helpful at Bridge. That East held but one Spade, seemed hardly probable, because if that were the case, West would have held six to the King-Jack and would doubtless have bid three Spades on North's redouble. South permitted the Queen to hold but won the next round with the Ace. The trump finesse came next, but the fall of the King did not deter South from continuing on for six rounds. With the two leads of Spades and one of Clubs, East was now down to four cards, which necessarily were the Ace-Queen of Clubs and the King-Jack of Diamonds. While it seems improbable that West can hold the King of Diamonds, it is not impossible, but the finesse is unnecessary. East is thrown in the lead with the Club and after making two tricks in the suit, must lead up to the Diamond tenace, permitting the Declarant to fulfill his contract.

Tactics of quite dissimilar order were required for the other game.

♠ K 6 2
♥ A
♦ A J 3
♣ Q J 10 9 5 4

♠ Q J 5
♥ K Q 10 6 2
♦ Q 9
♣ A 7 2

NORTH
WEST EAST
SOUTH

♠ 7 4
♥ J 9 7
♦ K 10 8 6
♣ K 8 6 3

♠ A 10 9 8 3
♥ 8 5 4 3
♦ 7 5 4 2
♣ —

West was the dealer and bid a Heart, North two Clubs, East two Hearts and South two Spades. The bidding progressed until South obtained the contract at four Spades, doubled by West. The King of Hearts was opened, won by the singleton Ace and a merry cross-ruff developed until the fourth round of Clubs was overruffed by West. The Declarant won seven trump tricks and two red Aces, so the contract went on the rocks for one trick. At the second table South also obtained the contract at four Spades doubled. The opening was the same, but here the Declarant thought he had a much safer method of play than the cross-ruff. Careful count shows that ruffing the hand will most likely result in losing two tricks in Diamonds and two in Spades. If, however, the long suit in dummy can be established, the game cannot only be won but an extra trick made. The

only serious point to consider is whether West holds both the Ace and King of Clubs. With such holding, the proper original opening should have been the King of Clubs, so one of the Club honors is marked with East. The nine of Clubs was led and the two of Diamonds was discarded. West won with the Ace and led the Queen of Diamonds. This was West's best defense. The trump lead would have resulted in the loss of the balance of the tricks, if Declarant played properly. On the Diamond lead, dummy won with the Ace and led the Queen of Clubs. East refused to play the King and South discarded another Diamond. The Jack of Clubs was then led and covered with the King, trumped by South, and the Ace, followed by a low Spade put dummy in to lead the high Club, upon which South discarded the fourth Diamond. West trumped with his last trump and continued the Diamond lead, but the Declarant was now well out of the suit. After ruffing the Diamond, the three losing Hearts were disposed of, by trumping one of them with the remaining trump in dummy and discarding two on the last two Clubs. By conserving the Heart ruff until the end, the Declarant was enabled to not only fulfill his doubled contract, but to make one over losing only one trick each in Spades and Clubs.

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CHAPTER SIXTY-SEVEN

ESTABLISHING A SUIT

FAILURE to win the game on a hand that seems to be bubbling over with high cards is usually attributed to three major causes.

First in favor is: "The cards didn't fit."

Second: "The adversaries played too well."

Third: "I played badly." It is true that this last reason is sometimes camouflaged a bit with extenuating circumstances such as, "The luck was against me," or, "If I had guessed the finesse the other way," but it would be a shock to many players if they could see how often perfect play would overcome all obstacles, even "cards that don't fit," "unfortunate distribution" and "opponents possessed of uncanny skill."

On the following deal, both the cards and the enemy were exorcized and the player seemed to feel greatly aggrieved at his bad "breaks":

		♠ A Q 7	
		♥ 8 5	
		♦ J 5	
		♣ J 9 7 6 4 3	
♠ 10 9 8			♠ 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 9 6 3			♥ 10 7
♦ K Q 3			♦ 9 8 2
♣ 8 2			♣ A 10 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ K J	
		♥ A Q 4 2	
		♦ A 10 7 6 4	
		♣ K Q	

South secured the contract with a bid of one No Trump and the six of Hearts was the opening lead. The ten, played by East, drove out the Queen and the Jack of Spades won the second trick. The Declarant was so pleased at this clever "finesse" that he almost forgot to establish his long Club suit, but awoke in time to lead the King and Queen, which were permitted to win. The next lead was the King of Spades, which dummy overtook with the Ace and a third round of Clubs cleared the suit, all ready to be made—when someone would be kind enough to lead a Spade. The opponents obstinately refused to lead anything but red suits and the Declarant could not make more than eight tricks. If East had not held off twice on the Club leads, or if South had had another Club, then it would have been easy sailing for game, as the Declarant sorrowfully pointed out to his

partner. "But," expostulated the long-suffering partner, "why didn't you play the Clubs first and overtake the Jack of Spades with the Queen. Then the Clubs could have been made-up while my hand still held a card of re-entry to bring them in?"

"You seem to forget," replied South, "that I held the King and Jack of Spades alone. Overtaking the Spades twice would not only be throwing away a sure Spade trick, but would establish the entire suit against me."

Of course, North's criticism was just. The apparent sacrifice of one Spade trick would have gained three additional tricks in Clubs. As a matter of fact, South would have had an excellent chance to score a Small Slam by proper play. Overtaking the Spades twice in the dummy would have certainly brought in the Club suit, and at the tenth trick—two Spades, two Hearts and six Clubs—West would have been subjected to a pseudo-squeeze play. Dummy holds the seven of Spades and two Diamonds and West is down to the top Spade, the top Heart and the King-Queen of Diamonds. The discard on the tenth trick would have been exhilarating—except to West. The Spade must be held or the seven in dummy will make. The choice must be made between the King of Hearts and one of the two Diamonds. If South has kept two Diamonds and one Heart any discard by West must lose a trick and the original Spade gambit is retrieved. Should South have discarded differently, West is still helpless, unless he has carefully noted every discard made from the start.

A hand that seemed absurdly simple and still required careful play to win the game is the one following:

♠ A			
♥ K 10 8 7 2			
♦ A K 5 2			
♣ 8 7 4			
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 20px;"> ♠ K Q 9 6 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ J 9 8 6 ♣ K J </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> NORTH <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WEST EAST </div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> SOUTH </div> </div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> ♠ 4 2 ♥ 9 6 5 3 ♦ 10 7 3 ♣ Q 10 9 3 </div> </div>			
♠ J 10 8 7 5 3			
♥ A			
♦ Q 4			
♣ A 6 5 2			

South bid Spades over the partner's Heart call and secured the contract. The Diamond was led, won by the Queen and the Ace of Hearts played before the dummy was put in with the Ace of trumps. The two high Diamonds, followed by the King of Hearts, afforded South two Club discards, but three Spade tricks and one in Clubs were eventually lost.

It is apparent from the start that only nine tricks can be made on this deal, unless one of two contingencies occur. Either the opposing trumps must be divided evenly, or dummy must be able to establish a Heart trick and force the hand containing the four trumps. The best chance is to try for the suit. If this fails, then the last hope is to endeavor to "bump" the trumps. When dummy takes the lead at the third

trick with the Ace of Spades, a low Heart is ruffed and a trump led. West will win the trick, and regardless of his continuation, the Declarant will regain the lead and obtain two Clubs discards on North's winning cards. When the King of Hearts drops the Queen, then the ten becomes high and the necessity of finding the missing trumps fortunately placed, is obviated. Both trumps may make separately without jeopardizing the game. The ten of Hearts is led and the last losing Club discarded by South. Played in this way the Declarant succeeds in winning the game, losing nothing but the three trump tricks. If one of the high Hearts had been with East, then it would have been impossible to establish the ten for the third Club discard and the last resort would have been to play for an even division of the opposing trumps and endeavor to drop them together in one lead.

CHAPTER SIXTY-EIGHT

GORGONS AND HYDRAS AND CHIMERAS DIRE

THAT a game so universally popular as Auction Bridge should be burdened with one outstanding bar-sinister is to be greatly deprecated, especially so, as it is entirely unnecessary. I refer to the misunderstandings and discordance directly resultant to the use of the informatory double. In England and other countries this American convention was to a great extent taboo, because it was thought by some players to be of no value and by others to be of such great worth as to give an unfair advantage. Unquestionably, the doubles, when thoroughly understood and properly used, are of incalculable importance and refusal to make use of them would be conceding a material handicap to the players who do. But, by no means, is the informatory double a perfect device, even aside from its most disagreeable feature—the multifarious meanings given to it by different players.

Hardly any two players use the doubles alike and day after day at many of the leading Clubs, before a session of play is started, the perennial question is asked: "How do you use the doubles?" It is not unusual to hear four players give four different versions, all of which must be faithfully remembered and carefully considered or a mix-up is apt to occur that will lose points galore. Curiously, too, regardless of the time wasted in explanations,

situations arise continually that leave the doubler's partner in doubt as to the course his partner wishes him to pursue. When we stop to ponder at the various meanings given to informatory doubles, it is little wonder that the entire subject is so involved.

Some of the interpretations are:

Any double of a one-trick contract when made at the first opportunity, and provided the partner has not already bid.

The double of one No Trump or a two-trick suit-bid.

The double of a one No Trump or a three-trick suit-bid.

The double of a one-trick contract, even after the partner has bid.

The "Right and Left" double.

This last double is used when a No Trump bid is overcalled. If overcalled by the Left Hand adversary the double is informatory. If by the Right Hand adversary, it means business.

A number of players do not double informatorily after they have bid a No Trump. Others after they have made any bid.

It is not surprising that even members of the same Club do not know where they are at without a daily catechism, while casual visitors are more or less dumfounded.

As every experienced Bridge player knows, there are numerous deals where the informatory double is a distinct detriment. When a player deals and bids one of those No Trumpers that reeks to the skies—an Aceless affair with three Kings and a well guarded Jack—and the Second Hand holds an exceptionally strong hand, including the four Aces, there are three things that can be done; pass, double, or bid two No Trumps. To pass seems

cravenly and unsatisfactory. To double in this situation is always informatorily, and unless the partner is sufficiently strong to leave the double in, which is rarely the case, the take-out will almost invariably result in the doubler bidding two No Trumps. Where the double is used conventionally it is utterly impossible to convey to the partner that this specific double is for penalty purposes only, and to permit the doubled contract to stand is the one way to adequately strafe the adversary for making an unwarranted bid. Possibly the most trying situation of all, is where the dealer starts with a preëptive bid of say, "three Spades." The game and rubber for the opponents may depend upon whether they double for business or pleasure. If they double a three bid for a take-out, then they have no alternative but to pass and must be content with a 200 penalty, when 400 could have been made just as easily. If they double such a bid for penalties, then they must, at times, forego a game hand at their best make and yet not be able to defeat the opposing contract. Some time ago I doubled a preëptive three Spade bid that would have been defeated for 300 points. My partner construed the double as being informatory and put in a bid that was doubled and defeated for 400 points. (No, Constance, dear, I won't repeat what you said and I said and—we said.)

Recently I participated in a game where an original three Heart bid was doubled and left in. The contract was made and with it went the game and rubber. The double was meant to be an informatory one, and if it had been so read, the resultant response of four Clubs, on five headed by the ten, would have been good for eleven tricks.

All these misunderstandings, complications, time de-

vouring explanations and post-mortem discussions that always follow a contretemps of this sort can be indubitably done away with. The solution is simple and consists of defining a double as meaning—a double! It may appear strange and iconoclastical to only double when a player means it, but—why not? The many advantages of the informatory double can still be retained, but without the attendant confusion and undesirable evils. When a player desires the partner to bid, instead of doubling, which after all is the equivalent of a kick under the table, the lifting of the eye-brows or a deprecatory cough, would it not be just as well to say so? Any word or phrase would do—possibly the proposal for a bid from partner might be conveyed by the words, “I propose.” It is true that in a mixed pair game this term might be understood and unduly burden Dan Cupid, but it’s worth the chance. To “challenge” seems like an excellent way to force the partner to bid—or double. Anything would be infinitely preferable to the ambiguities and perplexities generated by an artificial convention that is entirely unnecessary, because the same result can be obtained by perfectly natural means. The “challenge bid” would mean exactly the same as the informatory double, with the single exception that the partner could not pass, unless there was an intervening bid. Of course, when the “challenge” was made over a bid that suited the partner, then the occasion would be similar to that when an informatory double would be left in. The logical response would be to double, and such a double, always for penalty purposes, would make the situation clear, concise and understandable to all the players at the table. I cannot see one single objection that could be made against this simplification of the game, except possibly precedent or prejudice, but when the tremendous

possibilities are considered in the way of time saved at the primary classes where individual preferences are aired, and the elimination of a convention that it has been impossible to standardize in this Country or to universally adopt abroad, then I sincerely believe this epochal bid should be tried out.

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CHAPTER SIXTY-NINE

I CHALLENGE

TO "Challenge" a bid would be, in substance, the same as an informatory double. The partner, unless there is an intervening bid, must bid or double. With this convention in effect, all doubles could have but one meaning, a desire to defeat the opposing contract at double penalties. Some of the experts seem to think, that while this bid has wonderful possibilities, a few of the good points of the informatory doubles might be lost. One of the examples given was where a No Trump was bid, doubled Second Hand and left in by the partner. At times penalties of four or five hundred points were won, and properly, because of poor bids. Of course, with the "Challenge" in lieu of the double, Fourth Hand instead of passing the informatory double, would obtain the self-same situation by doubling. It is true that the enemy might escape by running into a two-trick suit-bid, but with powerful hands held by the opponents, it would usually be a case of jumping from the frying-pan into the fire. Another case cited is where a No Trump is doubled and redoubled by Third Hand. Fourth Hand rescues with, say, two Spades and now the original bidder, knowing that his partner holds a strong hand, can safely insert a business double if he has fair strength in the suit bid. With the "Challenge," Third Hand will pass and the two Spades will be bid as before, but the First Hand cannot double because he does not know of

the strength held by his partner. The situation, however, is not lost but merely delayed, as Third Hand can now "Challenge" and First Hand will then be in a position to double. I can think of no situation where the new bid will not work to at least as good advantage as the double, and and in most cases, considerably better. When a player has bid one No Trump and Fourth Hand has designated a lead with a bid of two in suit, it has always been a moot question whether a double should be for business or pleasure. At this time, opinion is about evenly divided, some of the best players insist upon their doubles being left alone by their partners, while others are equally insistent that their partners bid, unless they hold cards sufficiently strong to defeat the contract. Any specific hand is wholly at the mercy of what particular system the opponents happen to be in favor of.

At the recent State Congress at Indianapolis, seventeen teams of four played in the championship match. On deal number sixteen, the scores were about evenly divided between a loss of 430 points or 50 points and it was not bad bidding that caused the difference, but the method of using the double.

The dealer bid one No Trump and Fourth Hand held these cards:

♠ K J 9 6 4
♥ 2
♦ A K 5
♣ 8 5 3 2

It is hardly conceivable that players of championship caliber would not bid two Spades in this position. The immediate Spade lead may be the only way to save the game against the No Trump contract, and if played at

Spades the game might easily be won, with only fair support from partner. However, on this particular deal the original bidder held four Spades to the Ace-Queen-ten, together with exceptional strength in side suits. It required merely routine play to defeat the doubled Spade contract 400 points, provided it was used conventionally as a business double, and therefore, left in by the partner.

Where the players preferred to use the informatory double in such positions, the deal was played at two No Trumps with the result that 50 points could only be scored, two odd and three Aces. It would appear from this that the argument strongly favors the use of doubles for penalty purposes only, after a No Trump has been overcalled by the adversary, but before this point is conceded, permit me to cite another case. At the duplicate tournament of the Knickerbocker Whist Club of New York, the following interesting deal was played with many variations in the score:

		♠ Q J 6 2	
		♥ J 4 3	
		♦ K 7 5	
		♣ 8 7 4	
♠ 9 5			♠ K 8 4
♥ 9 8 7 5			♥ A 6
♦ Q 8 6 3			♦ J 2
♣ 9 6 5			♣ K Q J 10 3 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST <div style="background-color: black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 10 7 3	
		♥ K Q 10 2	
		♦ A 10 9 4	
		♣ A	

South dealt and bid a No Trump, West and North passed and East bid two Clubs. Again the system of using the doubles was a vital factor. It would hardly be sound tactics to double with the South hand, if the business double was used, as the net result would probably be insufficient compensation for the possible loss of game. If two Hearts were bid, the Club opening would make the going extremely difficult for the Declarant. Should the Hearts be played for an even break, after being forced with the second round of Clubs, it would result in the contract being defeated. Careful play might succeed in making three odd at Hearts, but the game, against perfect defense, does not seem a possibility. With the use of the informatory double by South, the Spade response by partner will easily be good for eleven tricks, together with forty honors and the game. To sum up, the conventional doubles should be right about half the time, while the Challenge bid could not go amiss. To double in any position would mean nothing but a double and to Challenge a bid would be a demand that the partner take some action. The adoption of this single convention would at once relegate to oblivion more than a dozen confusing and harassing situations that only tend to bewilder and perplex the Bridge player of to-day.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

IN THE HANDS OF THE GODS

THE informatory double, as it is now used by Bridge players has so many meanings that it is little more than a private convention. The doubling player generally knows what he means, the partner may know, but the adversaries can only know if they have studiously cross-examined each player before the game commenced. No matter what system of informatory doubles the individual player prefers to use, hardly a session of Bridge is played where it would not work out more advantageously to use some other method.

When we stop to reflect how unnecessary it all is, how absurdly simple it would be to do away with the confusion and perplexities of a circuitous convention that so few players are in agreement upon, then I firmly believe it would be a wonderful thing for the game of Auction Bridge to eliminate the informatory doubles altogether and substitute instead a perfectly natural and un-hypocritical request for a bid from partner. To "Challenge" a bid would be the equivalent of saying: "Partner, please bid," and the dual meaning of the double would be automatically removed. The one criticism that has been made to this proposed change, is that it would add a new convention to a game that is already overburdened with conventions. As an actual fact it would obliterate more than a dozen that the average player finds it most difficult to understand. When it is considered that at one

New York Club the informatory doubles are used fourteen different ways, the necessity of doing something to curb this evil can be readily seen. Even the conscientious player finds it trying to explain his preference to each member of the table unless he is asked, and when he favors the use of the "right and left double" or a business double after a one bid, it leans very much towards an unfair private convention, when his partner understands his meaning and the adversaries do not. With the proposed change, the question of the player's judgment as to whether it would be preferable to double or ask the partner to bid, would not be interfered with. But the correct interpretation of his meaning could not be misconstrued, either by his partner or by the adversaries.

Undoubtedly, the greatest advantage of the new convention would be the power to ask for a bid from partner at any time—even if the adversary started with a bid of four in suit. In like manner, a business double could be inserted at any time or place. The player who still insists upon opening the bidding with a bid of two, on a long suit without tops, would quickly be made to repent his error.


That the informatory double was not functioning properly has been recognized by the experts for a long time. To endeavor to standardize the meaning of each double was found to be an impossible task. Even the leading authorities do not agree whether the double of an original bid of three in suit, should be construed as business or informatory. When a No Trump is bid and overcalled Second Hand with two Spades, what is meant by Third Hand's double? Such an eminent writer as Milton C. Work says he prefers this double to be informatory, while the equally eminent Wilbur C. Whitehead, is de-

cidedly in favor of penalties. The question is a close one and on certain specific hands either system might prove a big winner, while the Challenge bid would always be 100 percent right.

It has been suggested that the doubler be permitted to state whether his double is "informatory," or "business," as a solution to this problem. Undoubtedly, this would be a great help, but if a change in the rules is necessary, why adopt a makeshift when a simple solution is at hand?

The following hand was sent me for my opinion as to the best procedure with North's cards:

♠ 2
 ♥ 10 8 6 4
 ♦ 9 5
 ♣ 10 7 6 5 3 2

♠ 7 3 ♥ A J 9 2 ♦ A Q J 4 ♣ K Q 8	NORTH WEST  EAST SOUTH	♠ Q J 10 9 6 4 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ K 8 3 ♣ J
--	---	---

♠ A K 8 5
 ♥ 5 3
 ♦ 10 7 6 2
 ♣ A 9 4

South dealt and bid one Spade, which West doubled. What should North do? The answer is quite simple. I don't know! And I defy any of the authorities to do any better. South's bid is perfectly sound, as all experts will agree. West's double is proper and a rescue by North on a trickless hand is poor tactics. The chances are that East

South has the deal and bids a No Trump, which is passed by West and North. East's bid of two Spades passes to North and what should he do? To this point the bidding is absolutely conventional and under the present rules, North's double would be foolhardy unless his partner knew he was doubling for a take-out. If he could find his partner's best suit the chances for game would be very great. As a matter of fact, a Small Slam in Clubs can be made. But, if it so happened that North uses the double in this position for penalties? A bid of two No Trumps would be defeated, while a chance-suit bid would lie between the Hearts and Diamonds. Any number of hands could be cited where it would work the other way; a double for business would net 400 points or more, while the take-out would not even land the game. With the "Challenge bid" in vogue, a Spade would be called a —Spade and a Double would be called a Double. The difficult plays and intricate bids that belong to the game of Bridge would still be there, while an artificial and much-abused convention would be a thing of the past.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-ONE

WHEN THE SUITS ARE WEAK AND THE PLAY IS STRONG

A CONSTANTLY occurring situation at the Bridge table is when the Declarant has the play of a contract that apparently offers an equal choice between two ways of trying to win the game. If the combined hands contain two suits of equal length, it does not necessarily follow that the stronger suit must be the one to be played for. Quite often the circumstances are such that the proper play is plainly indicated to the expert, either by the bidding or the knowledge that the game cannot be won, even if a specific method of play be successful, while the alternative line of treatment will win the game, if the cards lie favorably. Undoubtedly, the main difference between a winning and a losing player is the ability to play difficult hands in such a way, that if there is a chance to land the game, it will not be overlooked. On the following deal, perfect play would have won the game, instead of which the contract was defeated for fifty points:

that suit impossible, so when West led a Spade, dummy played the Ace and switched to the Diamonds. East played the nine, but the Declarant took his only chance and went up with the King, thereby succeeding in making seven tricks, one short of his contract. Although both the Club and Diamond suit were of the same length, the Clubs were headed by three honors and appeared the better suit to play for, as the Diamonds contained but a single honor, and if the Ace lay in the West hand, the suit would be solid with the enemy. The important point, however, is that unless East holds the Ace of Diamonds, the game cannot be won. Even if the opposing Clubs were divided three and three, the Declarant would take but eight tricks—four in Clubs and two each in Spades and Hearts. That the Ace of Diamonds is in the East hand is practically a certainty, as East's bid of two Hearts would have been doubtful, unless he held that card. Four Kings and three Aces are in sight and the remaining Ace must be marked in the East hand. The Diamond suit is the better one to play for, because if it breaks evenly the game must be won with the top cards in the remaining suits, while the even break in the Club suit is not enough. The play, after winning the Heart trick, is one that many good players would overlook. A low Diamond should be led up to the weak dummy. While this appears contrary to the teachings of the great masters, it is nevertheless sound tactics. Under the most favorable conditions, two tricks in Diamonds must be lost, so it would be futile to sacrifice an important reëntry card to obtain the lead in the dummy hand. The lead of a low Diamond to the extreme weakness in dummy may strike the enemy as simply a bluff play and the Diamond lead may even be continued by them, in which event the advancement of

the suit is accomplished without giving up a reëntry. If the Hearts are continued, then dummy must be put in and the remaining Diamond led. The even split in this suit, together with the top cards in sight, ensures the game without further trouble.

It may shock some players who rather fancy their game, to be told that it is not always the best policy to bid the stronger of two major suits, although they be of equal length. When both suits are sufficiently strong in top cards, the higher ranking suit is usually the better bid. This is equally true of two minor suits. Not only because of superior bidding strategy, but in the actual play of the cards does this prove to be winning procedure. On the following deal, the game depends entirely upon knowledge of this principle and even expert play could not drag out the game by any other means:

	♠ 5 3 2	
	♥ 5 3 2	
	♦ A Q 7	
	♣ 10 9 8 6	
♠ K J 8	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NORTH </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WEST <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> EAST </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> SOUTH </div> </div>	♠ Q 9
♥ 10 6		♥ J 9 8
♦ K 10 4		♦ J 9 5 2
♣ Q J 5 3 2		♣ A K 7 4
	♠ A 10 7 6 4	
	♥ A K Q 7 4	
	♦ 8 6 3	
	♣ —	

South had the deal and secured the contract with a bid of one Heart. The Club was opened and South ruffed. Two rounds of trumps was followed by the Ace and a low Spade. A second Club ruff, with Spades not yet established, seemed to force a Diamond finesse. The finesse won and the last Spade was led from dummy. Although East held a losing trump, he did not make the mistake of trumping the Spade and the Declarant's last hope was gone. The game could not be won! If the bid had been a Spade, notwithstanding that dummy held exactly similar cards in both major suits the game would have been a simple thing. After ruffing the Club, a low trump must be led. The second Club ruff is followed by the Ace of Spades and then the Hearts are led until West trumps with his remaining trump. The Diamond finesse is taken as before, and the adversaries are held down to the two trump tricks.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-TWO

WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

THE correct play of a hand at the Bridge table does not invariably obtain the best results. While the law of averages may be ninety-nine percent in favor of a certain method of procedure, the lone chance must win occasionally. If this were not the case, the percentage would automatically be a hundred instead of ninety-nine. When a player succeeds in fulfilling his doubled contract, together with a trick or two more than he bargained for, the result is always pleasing—to the winning players.

The play of the following deal elicited great admiration from the dummy and the remark "partner, you certainly played the hand for all there was in it," did not misstate the literal truth. As a matter of fact, most experts would have made four tricks less than was made by the Declarant:

	♠ K 6 3	
	♥ 10 9 8 5 4	
	♦ 7 6	
	♣ J 9 5	
♠ Q J 10 8 5 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ 9 4
♥ K Q J		♥ 7 6 3 2
♦ K 9 3		♦ Q 8 5
♣ K		♣ 7 6 4 2
	♠ A 7	
	♥ A	
	♦ A J 10 4 2	
	♣ A Q 10 8 3	

South dealt and bid a No Trump, West overcalled with two Spades, North three Hearts, East passed and South went to three No Trumps. This was doubled by West and passed all around. The bidding was hardly up to modern standards, but quite conventional with the average player. West's bid, notwithstanding that he had the lead and good cards of reëntry, was not the best tactics. If the Declarant had been driven into Clubs, the game would have been assured, even with the loss of a trump trick. North's three Heart bid was not sound although most players in similar situations do not hesitate to make such bids. After the partner has bid No Trumps, no suit appears too weak to participate in the auction. South's three No Trump bid was the glamour of the hundred Aces. On the opening lead of the Queen of Spades, South won with the Ace—and then stopped to plan his campaign.

Of course, he was a bit late, as his time for counting was before he had played from dummy. Obviously, the only play in the hand was the Club finesse and the King of Spades should have been played, with that object in view. To try for the finesse at this stage would necessitate getting the dummy in the lead and to accomplish that, would require a Spade lead, setting up the entire suit for the enemy. As the best way out of a bad mess, South decided to make sure of eight tricks, by permitting the King of Clubs to make, so the Ace of Clubs was led and, lo and behold, the singleton King fell ingloriously. Now the Declarant has nine tricks in sight for the fulfillment of his doubled contract, but apparently he never gave a thought to such petty play. Dummy was put in with the nine of Clubs and the Diamond led, the ten finesse going to the King. A Spade lead that cleared the suit for West was won by the King in dummy and regardless of the solid array of Spades against him the Declarant took the second Diamond finesse, with the remark: "Here's praying for luck." The Jack won the trick, after which it was smooth sailing for a Small Slam, and the efficacy of prayer to the Blind Goddess was established on a sound basis.

When the play of a hand is not amenable to luck, then it is incumbent upon the student to do the right thing if he hopes to hold up his end. The play of the following deal appeared to hinge entirely upon chance, but close study will prove that proper strategy would have discounted the bad breaks:

		♠ A 10 6	
		♥ J 8 5	
		♦ 9 6 4	
		♣ A K J 5	
♠ K 8 7 4			♠ 5 3 2
♥ 7 3			♥ Q 10 9
♦ A Q 8			♦ J 10 2
♣ Q 10 8 2			♣ 9 7 6 4
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div></div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
		♠ Q J 9	
		♥ A K 6 4 2	
		♦ K 7 5 3	
		♣ 3	

North had the deal and the one Club bid was passed by East and the contract went to South, with a bid of one Heart. With the Clubs shown by dummy, West opened the four of Spades, which was won by South with the nine. Two rounds of Hearts failed to drop the Queen and the game was dependent upon the location of the Ace of Diamonds and the Queen of Clubs. If an unsuccessful Club finesse was taken and the Diamonds also proved badly placed, then the Declarant would lose a trick more than he would if he refused to take a chance on losing a Club at all. Should the Ace of Diamonds be with East the game must be won by taking one Diamond discard on the high Club, conceding the adversaries two tricks in Diamonds and one in Hearts. The hand was played on this premise and while it appeared that the game was lost because of unfortunate distribution, the reasoning of the Declarant was not entirely sound. While it is true that the

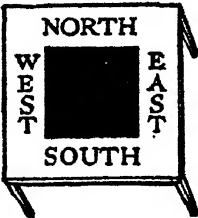
game must be won if East holds the Ace of Diamonds, it must also be won if West holds the Queen of Clubs and practically nothing is lost by taking that chance first. If the Club finesse is lost and the Ace of Diamonds is on the wrong side, then the game is impossible by any method of play. The important difference is, that if the Club is right, the location of the Diamond is immaterial and if the Club is wrong the Diamond chance is still remaining. The gamble is the same on either card, but two chances to one on the game, when the possible loss cannot be more than eight points, are odds that should never be overlooked. There are numerous deals where similar situations appear and the ability to take full advantage of them, makes for a well-balanced, winning game.

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CHAPTER SEVENTY-THREE

COAXING A MISPLAY

A FREQUENTLY occurring situation at the Bridge table, is when the adversary is arbitrarily forced to lead a specific suit. Having the choice of three leads, with the dummy exposed at the right, the play of a suit headed by a King up to the Ace-Queen, is hardly to be recommended; nor is the lead of a suit that can be trumped in dummy, while the Declarant obtains a discard in his hand. The third suit may not be a desirable one to lead, but it is probably the least of three evils. Occasionally, the Declarant is in a position where he can see that the enemy will be compelled to lead a certain suit that he is particularly desirous of not having led. To give the player a chance for an alternative lead is at times the only hope to win the game. A very pretty example, illustrating this point, came up in an important tournament game.

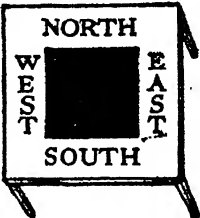
	♠ A 10 8 3	
	♥ 9 8 5 4 2	
	♦ 7 6 4 2	
	♣ —	
♠ K J 4 2		♠ 9 6 5
♥ 7 6		♥ K Q 3
♦ Q 8 5		♦ —
♣ K 9 5 3		♣ A Q J 10 8 7 4
	♠ Q 7	
	♥ A J 10	
	♦ A K J 10 9 3	
	♣ 6 2	

East dealt and bid a Club, South bid a Diamond, West a No Trump, North passed and East went to two Clubs. East's denial bid is made because the partner's No Trump may be predicated largely on the opening Club bid and, unless the No Trump is sufficiently strong to be rebid, the hand should play to better advantage at Clubs. South went on to two Diamonds and West, fearing a trap with the weak Heart suit, abandoned the No Trump and helped the Clubs to three. North, who had been quite content with the No Trump bid, did not care so much for Clubs and jumped the Diamonds to four. East thought he saw game with his partner's No Trump and subsequent support in Clubs, so he bid five Clubs. South correctly deduced that the bidding marked East void of Diamonds. With the game in jeopardy, he bid five Diamonds, which West doubled and all passed. The low Club was opened

and ruffed in dummy. A Heart was led, but East prevented the ten finesse, by going up with the Queen. South won with the Ace, ruffed another Club and then led a trump. East showing out, the King went up and upon the next play hinged the only hope in the hand. If the play that appears obvious is made—the lead of the Heart—East is plainly forced to make the one play that must save the game. With a trump remaining in dummy, East cannot continue leading Clubs and the Spade lead will remove the reëntry in dummy that is the only chance to make the nine of Hearts and afford Declarant a discard of the losing Spade. The lead of the Ace, followed by the Jack of Diamonds, put West in the lead, and with dummy now out of trumps, a Club lead that will force the strong hand to ruff, seems like sound play; or, if West makes the mistake of leading away from the King of Spades, that the No Trump bid marks with him, the game will be won by the Declarant. West steered clear of all pit-falls and led the Heart, East won with the King, South false-carding the Jack, and now East is compelled to find the correct play to save the game. The Declarant's trump play tends to make it seem that West holds another trump, in which case a Club continuation will produce the largest penalty. East did play a Club, allowing Declarant to make his doubled contract. Of course, if West's hand had held four trumps, then West should unquestionably have led the Club instead of the Heart when he had the lead, but this was apparently too close reasoning for East.

The question of taking a finesse against a Queen when holding eight cards in the two hands, is one that many players seem to be in doubt about. As a general thing, the finesse should be taken, but when it can be taken both ways, it is often difficult to decide which way to finesse.

When the bidding does not offer any clue, then the fall of the cards is the only guide the player has as to the best course to pursue.

		♠ J 4 3	
		♥ K J 10	
		♦ 9 7 6 2	
		♣ Q 10 6	
♠ 10 9 6			♠ A 8 7 5
♥ 6 4 2			♥ Q 8
♦ J 10 8			♦ Q 5 4 3
♣ A K 5 2			♣ J 8 7
			
		♠ K Q 2	
		♥ A 9 7 5 3	
		♦ A K	
		♣ 9 4 3	

With South's one Heart bid securing the contract, there was nothing in the bidding to assist the Declarant in locating the Queen of Hearts. That the game depended entirely upon the location of this one card, made it doubly important. The bidding of this hand, played in a duplicate match, was about evenly divided between a Heart and No Trump. At No Trumps, the two of Clubs was opened and the natural ten finesse held the Declarant down to one or two odd tricks. With the worthless Clubs, a five-card major suit headed by an Ace is slightly to be favored. Played at Hearts, the King of Clubs was opened and the seven from the partner encouraged West to follow with the Ace. Although the expected echo was not

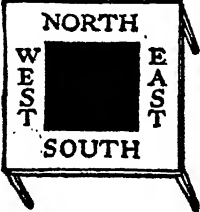
forthcoming, three rounds were played and dummy led the Jack of Hearts. East refused to make it easy by covering, so South went up with the Ace and finessed the return. This permitted the Queen to make and saved the game. On this deal, the drop of the cards should have enabled the Declarant to have won the game. When the eight is played to the first round of Hearts, it is a toss-up whether the finesse should not be taken at once. If not taken, it should be also refused on the return, because East is marked with the Queen or no more. If East holds a singleton eight of Hearts, then West holds four and the Queen cannot be caught, even if the finesse is successful. It is true that East may be false-carding, that is, playing the eight while he holds a lower card, but that chance must be taken in a situation so close as this. Usually the drop of the cards tell the tale and no player can false-card a singleton. With both the nine and seven of Hearts in his hand, the Declarant's best play was not to finesse into East's hand.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-FOUR

GUESS-WORK

TO eliminate guess-work as much as possible, is to reach the highest stage of Bridge development. It seems like very bad luck to have every guess go wrong, especially when the game might have been won with a single fortuitous combination of circumstances. After all, each chance is separate and complete in itself. Because three chances have gone wrong, is no reason why the next one will not be equally unfortunate. I firmly believe that at least fifty percent of the chances taken by the average player are entirely unnecessary and avoidable. When the game-going trick can be won beyond the shadow of a doubt, why hazard a chance? As Laertius remarked many centuries ago: "Fortune is unstable, while our will is free."

It hardly seems possible that in a duplicate match only one player in seventeen made the game on the following hand. Opportunity did not blow a horn.

	♠ 9 7 4	
	♥ 8 6 5	
	♦ A J 10 7 2	
	♣ 10 5	
♠ K 5 2		♠ J 10 8 3
♥ K 9 7		♥ J 10 4 2
♦ Q 9		♦ 8 5
♣ K J 9 3 2		♣ Q 6 4
	♠ A Q 6	
	♥ A Q 3	
	♦ K 6 4 3	
	♣ A 8 7	

South had the deal and secured the contract with a bid of one No Trump. The three of Clubs was opened and the Queen was permitted to hold the first trick. The second Club lead was taken by the Ace, and the King, followed by a low Diamond showed that suit to be solid. It is now apparent that eight tricks are in sight and if either the Spade or Heart finesse should prove successful, the game must be won. At this point there is absolutely no clue as to what suit offers the best chance for a winning finesse, and as it is not necessary that both finesses be taken to win the game, the Declarant runs down the Diamond suit and watches the discards closely. It should be noted that if both finesses were essential, North could not obtain the lead for a second finesse, if the Diamonds were made at once. In such a case, after three rounds of Diamonds, one finesse would be taken, so that South would have a Diamond remaining to put North in for the second finesse.

That West is going to be squeezed in finding three discards is manifest, but unless he gives himself away by too much squirming, there is no way for South to know this. In situations of this kind it is always wiser to play without undue hesitancy, even if an occasional error is made. And, besides, it is so much quicker. West's best method of discarding, would be the nine of Hearts, followed by the two and five of Spades. Such discarding appears to be dangerous, but a moment's thought will show that unless East holds the Queen of Spades, the Declarant is practically certain to finesse. This is exactly what took place and as neither of the finesses would have proven successful, it seemed like ill-luck, coupled with good defensive play.

At the table where the game was won, it was recognized that the game must be made without being forced to guess which finesse to take, irrespective of the defensive play of the adversaries. The second round of Clubs was taken and on the King of Diamonds, Dummy played the seven. The Queen of Diamonds on the next round made everything clear. West's lead of the three of Clubs, followed by the two on the second round, showed a five-card suit. The Diamonds are all accounted for, so instead of "guessing" what finesse to take, West is permitted to make his three remaining Clubs, after which he is forced to lead up to one of the major-tenaces in Declarant's hand for the extra trick that wins the game. The importance of playing the seven of Diamonds under the King is now seen. If this play were overlooked, it would be impossible for South to obtain the lead so that West could be stuck in with the third Club that South holds. Giving up either one of the Aces would prove fatal for all hopes of game. Of course, when South takes the third round of Diamonds

round. The Declarant won with the Queen and led the King of Spades, which North took and led the Ace of Clubs. From then on, the play was routine, East fulfilling the doubled contract. North bemoaned his luck in finding but one Club with East and that he did not underlead the Club suit, to put his partner in so that he could obtain the Heart ruff. His contention was that he held too many Clubs to underlead and take the chance that East might win with the singleton King. On the bidding, South was positively marked with the King of Clubs and North should have led the low Club, instead of the Ace. South had bid a No Trump without a Spade stopper. The Ace of Hearts is not enough even with the King-Jack in Diamonds. All the balance of the high cards have been located and the King of Clubs was essential for even a minimum No Trump bid.

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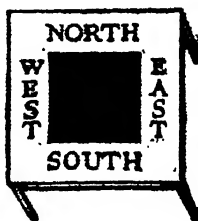
CHAPTER SEVENTY-FIVE

THE "SAVE THE GAME" FETISH

TO save the game is an admirable thing, but a number of otherwise excellent players defeat their own ends by being in too great a hurry to accomplish this objective. When the game is really in danger, the trick that will save it cannot be taken too quickly. The greatest value of an Ace is to kill an opposing honor and if these important cards are given up for no purpose but to prevent the imaginary loss of a game that is not in the least danger, then many tricks and penalties are lost that might just as well be had. I have seen players put up the Ace of trumps Second Hand with the remark: "Well, partner, we might as well save the game." The fall of the partner's singleton King was most distressing, especially so as passing the trick would have defeated the contract, but what can prevail against a player who is obsessed with the idea that the game must be saved—and at once! I admit it would have been a terrible calamity to have lost the Ace of trumps—there are so few trump Aces to be lost. Playing with a "game-saver" recently the following deal came up:

♠ Q 2 .
 ♥ J 4
 ♦ J 9 7 5 3
 ♣ 9 6 5 2

♠ A J 7 5
♥ K 10 6 3
♦ 10 4
♣ A Q J



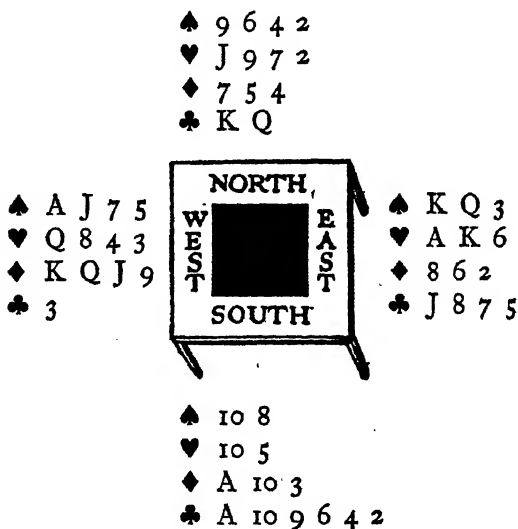
♠ K 9 8 3
♥ A 8 5 2
♦ 8 6 2
♣ 7 4

♠ 10 6 4
♥ Q 9 7
♦ A K Q
♣ K 10 8 3

I had the deal in the South position and bid a No Trump, which West doubled. North passed and East's "two Spades" secured the contract. After winning two tricks with the King and Queen of Diamonds, the three of Clubs was taken by the Jack in Dummy, and a low Spade was led, taken by the King and on the return of the three, the ten was played Second Hand. Finessing the Jack appeared obligatory, both from the original No Trump bid and the fall of the ten. If the Queen was with North, it seemed to have a guard and could not be captured. However, the finesse was taken and North won with the Queen. Now the time to save the game loomed invitingly and intriguingly. "South could not hold the King of Clubs, or he would not have led that suit. To justify the No Trump bid, he must have the Ace of Hearts." On this sophistical reasoning, North led the Jack of

Hearts and from then on there was a weeping and gnashing of teeth. East won with the Ace, took out the last opposing trump and finessed the ten of Hearts to land the game. While it seemed highly probable that South did hold the Ace of Hearts, how on earth could it be lost? East could not hold less than three Hearts and it was utterly impossible that his dummy could give him more than a single discard. The mythological Ace of Hearts was very much safer than the rock of Gibraltar! And as solace for the loss of game, North condoled with "well, partner, the finesse against the Queen of Hearts was marked even if I hadn't led the Jack." Succor!

The "saving the game" slogan is, at times, a vital factor, and occasionally it can only be accomplished with the aid of perfect card-reading.



South dealt and bid a Club, which West doubled, North passed, East bid a No Trump, which was passed all around. The opening lead was the six of Clubs, North winning with the Queen, and returning the King. After this there seemed little weakness in the dummy to lead up to, but the Heart appeared the best chance, so that suit was attacked. When South obtained the lead with the Ace of Diamonds the Clubs were still stopped by East and the game could not be saved. Of course, if North had guessed the Diamond instead of the Heart, South would have gotten in at once, but the final result would not have been altered. The play of this hand rested entirely with South. In response to West's informatory double, East was unable to bid either of the major suits, thereby disclaiming a holding of four cards in either of them. It is fair to presume that North can stop one or both of the majors and if this is true, South can save the game without question. That East holds four Clubs to the Jack is established by his No Trump bid and it hardly seems that the game can be won unless the Diamonds are brought in. South knows he can save the game before a single Diamond trick is made against him, provided he overtakes his partner's King of Clubs with his Ace and immediately clears the suit by leading the ten. As the Clubs cannot be brought in without conceding one trick in the suit to the enemy, the overtaking of the King with the Ace and setting up the Jack adversely is the only proper play, even though it is spectacular. East still has a chance or two left however. The Spades he holds solidly and if the Hearts break evenly he can still make game when he is permitted to make the Jack of Clubs. He quickly discovers that the Hearts are stopped and puts his hand in

with the King of Spades. If he runs the Spades at once, then it is too much to expect that he can gather in a trick in Diamonds. With the location of the Queen of Spades in doubt, South may be inveigled into passing a Diamond lead. If he does, the cry of "succor" may be again heard, but with slightly changed spelling.

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CHAPTER SEVENTY-SIX

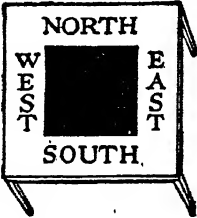
WHEN ENTRIES ARE SCARCE

ALL good Bridge players know the position where a double finesse should be taken for a chance to win an extra trick. Holding the Ace-Queen-ten or the Ace-Jack-ten, with normal length in suit, the percentage strongly favors the double finesse. When, however, the Declarant has not sufficient cards of reentry in the hand that he must lead from, then he is unable to make the play and must try some other means of holding the enemy down to as few tricks in the suit as possible. The best procedure in situations of this kind is illustrated in the following hand:

	♠ J 7	
	♥ A 9 6 2	
	♦ J 6	
	♣ 10 7 6 5 2	
♠ 10 9 6 5 4 2	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>	♠ K 8 3
♥ K J		♥ 10 8 5 3
♦ Q 9		♦ K 5 2
♣ Q 8 3		♣ K 9 4
	♠ A Q	
	♥ Q 7 4	
	♦ A 10 8 7 4 3	
	♣ A J	

South obtained the contract for one No Trump and the five of Spades was opened. East played the King and the Declarant won the trick with the Ace. The only hope for game was in bringing in the long Diamond suit before the Spades were established adversely, but the lack of reëntry cards in the dummy seemed to make this impossible, unless the Ace of Diamonds was fortunate enough to drop one of the honors. Played in this way the hand was good for seven tricks. If South had been able to put dummy in twice, the Diamonds would have been led from that hand and nine tricks would have been secured for the game. In situations similar to this, with five or six cards of a suit outstanding, the chances of catching a singleton honor are rather remote. Far the best chance is to play a low card up to the weak hand and trust that one of the honors is played Second Hand. If this happens, then the finesse should be taken on the second round of the suit. Of course, the weak hand must have at least one card of reëntry or little can be done but play for the drop. In the hand shown, which was played in a Club tournament, the low lead was the only way to win the game. West could hardly afford to play low with a holding of but two cards. If South held the King and East held the Ace, then the Jack in dummy would drive out the high card and set the suit in one round, while the play of the Queen would save partner's Ace.

When the defense of a close hand is perfect, then the Declarant must possess clear vision to land the game. Not many players would have succeeded in winning game on the hand following against the excellent play of the adversaries:

	♠ K Q 6	
	♥ A 6 5 3 2	
	♦ 5 4 2	
	♣ A 2	
♠ 7 4		♠ 9 3 2
♥ 10 9 8		♥ K Q J
♦ K J 7 6 3		♦ 10 9
♣ 10 4 3		♣ K Q J 8 6
	♠ A J 10 8 5	
	♥ 7 4	
	♦ A Q 8	
	♣ 9 7 5	

East had the deal and bid a Club which South overcalled with a Spade and bought the contract. The ten of Clubs was opened, won by the Ace and a low Heart led from dummy. East won with the Jack and played two rounds of Clubs, ruffing dummy. This forced Declarant to abandon all hope of bringing in the Heart suit as the three trumps in dummy were the only possible reentry. The Diamond finesse was the last resort but the King in West's hand held the contract to one trick short of game. South set out to play this hand properly, by endeavoring to set up the Hearts. If East had led the Diamond, after cashing in his Club trick, South would have gone up with the Ace and put North in with the Heart. The third round of Hearts would have been led and trumped. Then the Ace, followed by a low trump would have put dummy in the lead with the opposing

trumps gone and two good Hearts to afford two vital discards, only three tricks going to the enemy, one each in Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs. East's clever play in forcing dummy with the Club could have been circumvented by permitting the third round of Clubs to win the trick and discarding a Diamond from dummy. Another round of Clubs would have allowed North to get rid of another Diamond and made the game easy, so the logical switch should be to the Diamond which would have been taken with the Ace and the Hearts set as originally intended. South's failure on this deal was caused entirely by his inability to combat the best defense.

It is surprising how often a hand that appears quite hopeless can be saved by a clever player, who looks upon a hard situation as merely another difficulty to surmount. The brilliant Pierre Mattheys of the Knickerbocker Whist Club, showed his resourcefulness in playing this hand:

♠ 8 7 5 3				♠ 4
♥ A Q J 10 9 7				♥ K 5
♦ —				♦ 6 4 3
♣ J 10 8				♣ A K 7 6 4 3 2

	NORTH	
WEST		EAST
	SOUTH	

Seated in the West position, Mattheys obtained the contract for five Hearts doubled, the opponents having bid both Diamonds and Spades. North opened the Spade King and seeing there was only one Spade in the dummy, he then led the six of Hearts. How would *you* play the hand from this point?

The novice would undoubtedly drag down the trumps and find, to his chagrin, that he was blocked on the Club suit and could not get in the dummy to discard his three losing Spades. He would be down two tricks—two

hundred points! The average player would win the Heart trick in his hand and ruff a Spade in the dummy, then ruff a Diamond in his hand and pull down the trumps. His foresight in taking the Spade ruff would save him a hundred points! Mattheys played the hand very prettily and succeeded in fulfilling his contract, by winning the trick in dummy with the King of Hearts and leading the six of Diamonds, upon which he discarded a Club. The Diamond was won second hand with the Jack and was the last trick that the opposition could win. Personally, I would have played the hand a bit differently. A Small Slam is possible if the Club Queen is held without a guard. One round of Clubs should be played and if the Queen falls, the trumps can be pulled down, the high Club played from the West hand, and the third round of Clubs won by the Ace, permits an uninterrupted run of the suit. If the first round of Clubs does not drop the Queen, then a low Club must be led. Whether it is trumped or won by the Queen is immaterial, as the balance of the tricks are fairly safe. This method of play would not have gained in this instance as the Queen was once guarded. It must be admitted that an extraordinary distribution of the cards might place the three missing Clubs in one hand, in which case the contract would be defeated if played in this way. However, in that event no other natural line of play would show any better results. The chances are greatly in favor of the remaining Clubs not being bunched in one hand and the play must be based on the average possibilities.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-SEVEN

TWO-SUITERS

PROBABLY the most potent factor towards success in Bridge is the proper handling of the so-called two-suiters. When holding at least five cards each of two suits, with sufficient top card strength for an over-call bid, perfect treatment will either land the game, or be defeated for a minimum loss when the opposing hands are strong enough to win the game if permitted to play the contract. By perfect treatment is meant not only good play, but more important, sound judgment.

In many instances, the plain suit must be established before the trumps are drawn and, often a single lead of trumps too early in the play, will be quite enough to wreck the hand beyond recall. Indeed, some of the experts aver, that against this type of hand, an original trump opening is the best defense. While such radical attack can hardly be advised in every case, undoubtedly many hands might be saved by forward play of this kind. When the two-suited bidder is doubled for business, it nearly always turns out somewhat of a sad disappointment. The penalty is usually considerably less than expected. This is not at all surprising, because with two suits shown, the remaining cards cannot be more than two or three. With the dummy short of Declarant's plain

suit, a single quick trick goes a great way to help fulfill a contract of four or five.

The most delicate situation arises, when the enemy secures the contract at No Trumps, and the two-suit holder must choose the best opening lead. That an initial mistake in this position will prove costly is apparent, but to have such an error of judgment cost 1070 points, is putting the "strafe" a bit high. Yet on the following hand, the incorrect opening lead made a difference in the score of exactly that number of points.

		♠ A 5 2	
		♥ J	
		♦ K Q 10 6 4 3	
		♣ A 7 4	
♠ K J 9 7 4			♠ 8 3
♥ A K 8 5 2			♥ 6 4
♦ —			♦ A J 7 5
♣ Q 10 9			♣ J 8 6 3 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>		
		♠ Q 10 6	
		♥ Q 10 9 7 3	
		♦ 9 8 2	
		♣ K 5	

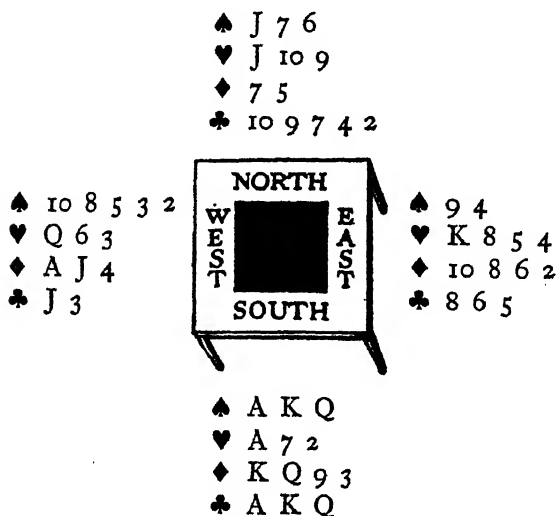
North had the deal and bid one Diamond, which East passed and South called a No Trump. West held the one type of hand that a good player does not want to pass or double with. It is obvious that the No Trump bid is predicated largely on the partner's minor suit call and very little assistance is required by West to produce a

game for his side. He therefore, bid two Hearts and North, with only one Heart went to three Diamonds. East passed, but South, nothing daunted, gaily went to three No Trumps. This West doubled and North redoubled, after which all hands passed. North's redouble, having in mind the rather sanguine three No Trump bid of partner's was not open to criticism, which is more than can be said of the bidding by West. If the urge to bid was too strong to resist, the Spades were the better suit to show. However, the crux of the hand lay in the opening lead. On the lead of the five of Hearts, dummy won with the Jack and the Declarant dropped the seven, which tended to make it appear to East that West held a six-card suit. The King of Diamonds was the next lead, East winning with the Ace and returning the Heart. South played the Queen, West won with the King and played the Ace. When East discarded a low Spade on the third round of Hearts, West shifted to the Queen of Clubs, but from that point, nothing mattered. Two tricks each in Diamonds and Hearts were all the Declarant lost, scoring 120 points below the line, together with 250 points for winning the rubber and 100 for making the redoubled contract.

That the Spade is the better opening is manifest for two reasons. First, the bidding marks South with at least two stoppers in Hearts, while the Spades are an unknown quantity. Second, it is usually sound play to endeavor to establish a long suit that is not headed by top cards and use the high cards of the second suit as cards of re-entry. If West had opened the fourth-best Spade, notwithstanding that the partner could afford him no more support in one suit than in the other, the correct principle of play would have netted a far different result. The

trick would have gone to Declarant's ten and the Diamond would have been started as before. East would win the trick and the return of the Spade would clear the suit, so that when East won the second Diamond trick, a Heart lead would put West in to make three tricks in Spades, which added to two tricks each in Diamonds and Hearts, would have totalled seven tricks, for the tidy penalty of 600 points.

When a player is dealt a hand that contains more than its share of the high cards, it hardly seems that he has just cause for complaint. It is exasperating, nevertheless, when the hand counts up one trick short of game and the dummy, holding the game going trick, has no card to get in and make the winning trick.



South dealt capably and bid a No Trump, which held the contract without competition. The three of Spades was

led and with eight tricks in sight, the Declarant led three rounds of Clubs. When the Jack fell, establishing two Club tricks in dummy, the lack of a reëntry card in that hand bordered on the tragic. On the third round of Clubs, West was put to a hard discard and with much perturbation gave up the four of Diamonds. It seemed to the Declarant that the only hope was to make up an extra Diamond trick, and so the King of Diamonds was led. This was won by the Ace and the Spades continued. When the Queen of Diamonds dropped the Jack, it looked as though West might be false-carding the ten, but the third round of Diamonds made it clear that the game could not be won. Instead of trying to win the game by brute force, a little subtlety might have been more effective. The opening lead of the three of Spades showed a suit of not more than five cards. As the Declarant would have been quite content to win the extra trick for the game, why not allow the two Spades to make and squeeze East on the discards? The best chance, after the three Clubs were taken, seemed to be to lead the King of Diamonds and when in, on the second Spade lead, make the Queen of Diamonds and the remaining Spade, before throwing the lead with a low Heart. If West dared to duck this lead, which would have been good play, South would have gained or lost nothing, provided East returned the Heart at once. But, with three sure tricks in hand, and the set up Clubs in dummy, most players in West's position would not have hesitated on the order of clattering up with the Queen. If West took the first Heart, the last two tricks must be won by the Declarant and the game would have been secured.

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CHAPTER SEVENTY-EIGHT

FORCING THE BREAKS

ALL Bridge players have, at some time or other, encountered the exasperating experience of having everything go wrong. The odd-trick is lost at No Trumps, when the game would have been a lay-down at Clubs. We take the opponents out of a bid that our partner is anxious to double, only to be ingloriously defeated at our make. We take a finesse one way, to meet with disaster, when the other way would have won the rubber. When things break wrong in this way—without contributory negligence—the best course is simply to grin and bear it. It won't last forever—nothing does!

I have often seen players obtain the contract at a perfectly proper bid and when their dummy went down with an aggregation of utterly worthless cards, there came a loud wailing and gnashing of teeth. The opponents at once perk up their courage and instead of playing a defensive game, they boldly attack and obtain a trick or two more than they would if the players' distress had not been so obvious. The psychological effect of a bold front is just about equal to one and a half quick tricks!

A player who cheerfully remarks that a dummy with a few scattered Jacks is "not so bad," stands a far better chance to obtain good results, than the one who groans in an agony of spirit: "I can't do anything with that

terrible hand." The general who can successfully disguise his weakness, always has a good fighting chance.

One of the best illustrations of what can be done with a hopeless looking hand when it is played boldly, and giving due acknowledgments to the opponents for such slight favors as they had to offer, is the one following, which was played in the duplicate tournament at the Knickerbocker Whist Club:

♠ 6 4 3 2
 ♥ 8 5 3
 ♦ 8 4
 ♣ Q 6 5 2

♠ Q 10 8
 ♥ A 4
 ♦ Q 10 9 2
 ♣ K 10 9 3

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ J 9 7
 ♥ Q J 10 7 6
 ♦ K 7 6
 ♣ 8 7

♠ A K 5
 ♥ K 9 2
 ♦ A J 5 3
 ♣ A J 4

After North and East had passed, I bid a No Trump in the South position and secured the contract. The three of Clubs was opened and the seven forced the Jack. It will be admitted that even a most sanguine optimist would find it difficult to enthuse very much over this hand. Five tricks are in sight, six tricks are possible if the King of Hearts is permitted to make and the seventh trick appears to be more or less dependent upon the good

will of the opponents. After the first trick is won, the best procedure is to play three rounds of Spades. This puts West again in the lead and sets up the last Spade in the dummy, though with but faint hope of ever getting in to make it. Nevertheless, the good Spade was somewhat of a menace to the enemy and West led the ten of Diamonds to preclude all possibility of dummy getting in with the eight. This did not render it overly easy for East to read the situation and the King was not put up, so the Jack won and a low Diamond was returned. West, still persistent in shutting out dummy's eight, put up the nine, but East, arising to the necessity of obtaining the lead, overtook with the King and led another Diamond through. This trick was taken with the Ace and West unhappily was put back in the lead with the Queen. Now, West, in a last desperate endeavor to get the Club set up before the last reëntry card was gone, played the low Heart. The King of Hearts won and now West's hand was easy to count with one Heart and three Clubs remaining. If the Heart was the Ace, as the play tends to show, West could not escape leading the Club—and losing the game! It will be noted that, on this hand, every Ace and face-card, together with the thirteenth Spade had to be made to win the game for the North and South players.

A hand that was prettily bid and played by George E. Terrill, of Brooklyn, shows the advantages of permitting the opponents to develop the hand.

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	♠ 4	
	♥ 10 9 8	
	♦ A Q 10 7 3	
	♣ K 10 8 5	
♠ 10 5	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>	♠ A Q J 6
♥ 7 6 4 3 2		♥ K J 5
♦ K 9 5		♦ J 6 4
♣ Q J 9		♣ A 6 2
	♠ K 9 8 7 3 2	
	♥ A Q	
	♦ 8 2	
	♣ 7 4 3	

East dealt and bid a Spade, which was passed up to North, who bid two Diamonds. On East passing, Terrill sitting South, bid two No Trumps and bought the contract. The ten of Spades was opened and both East and South refused to overtake, Declarant playing the eight. The second round was won by the Ace, the nine dropping Fourth Hand. The Declarant's hold-up on the first trick was sound play. He knew West must hold two Spades or the original Spade bid would probably have been rescued. The artistic false-carding of the eight and nine was to induce a continuation of the suit, although if West was leading correctly he could not have held more than three cards of the suit. With four cards or more the low card should be led. East played the Queen of Spades for the third round and was permitted to win that trick also. If South took the trick, he could do nothing better than to go on and clear the suit—and discarding from

the dummy was getting harder every round. As expected, East shifted to a low Heart and South won with the Queen. Even now there was no hurry to cash in the Spades, as three discards would put dummy in a bad way. A Diamond was led and the ten finesse went to the Jack. Now the Heart was cleared and with his last card of entry gone, the Declarant had to make the Spades, discarding the Clubs from dummy. After the Spades were made the Queen of Diamonds finesse won and four tricks in that suit gave the Declarant nine tricks for the game and rubber. While the East player might have made another trick by taking in the Ace of Clubs when last in the lead, it would not have saved the game as the opponents were ten points on the score.

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CHAPTER SEVENTY-NINE

PLAYING BAD HANDS

WHAT probably troubles the average player more than anything else, is the proper method of managing the ordinary hand, where the top-card strength is fairly well distributed and the player who is saddled with the final contract, has his work cut out to make his bid. It must be admitted that hands of this character predominate the game, and players who flounder about helplessly when called upon to play hands that do not seem to fit, are always at a sad disadvantage. Generally, the best procedure is to take deep finesses and endeavor to place the lead with the enemy, so that they have thrust upon them the onus of developing the hand.

At the National Championships, a hand of this type was played by the various experts, with most surprising results:

		♠ 6 4		
		♥ K 6 3		
		♦ K 2		
		♣ A Q 10 8 6 4		
♠ A 7 3				♠ Q J 9 5
♥ Q 9 5				♥ A J 10
♦ A J 4 3				♦ 10 8 6
♣ J 9 5				♣ K 7 2
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>			
		♠ K 10 8 2		
		♥ 8 7 4 2		
		♦ Q 9 7 5		
		♣ 3		

The North hand was the dealer, and in almost every instance, started with a Club bid. When East passed, South was in a quandary, but took the only avenue of escape left open and bid one No Trump. While this bid appears unwarranted, it is nevertheless correct. North's hand may be sufficiently powerful to even make the game, but if the North hand is a "mimmie" then the opponents doubtless can make the game, if the contract goes to them. As a matter of fact, the East-West cards are good for three No Trumps, scoring a total of 190 points. (At duplicate 125 points is allowed for the game.) On this deal I played the South cards and was very much pleased to be set only one trick. One player who held this hand, took in only three tricks, but R. R. Mabie, playing for the Metropolitan Whist Club of New York, actually

made his contract. The three of Diamonds was opened and won in the dummy with the King. A Spade was now led and the eight finessed, which held the trick, as the West hand refused to part with his Ace. A Club lead followed and the Queen won in dummy—East holding up this time. East played well in holding up, although the play loses a trick. If South holds two Clubs he will be able to bring in the entire Club suit should East take the first trick. If East did not hold the Ace of Hearts, the first Club trick should not be passed up, but holding that important card, it is apparent that the Heart King in dummy is not a card of reëntry. When the Queen of Clubs held, the Ace and another Club was played and the suit set. East was now in the lead and the Diamond was returned. West won two tricks in Diamonds, making a Diamond good with the Declarant, and then he was in difficulties.

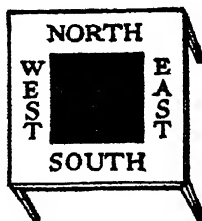
If South held the Ace of Hearts, as the bidding seemed to indicate, the game was lost unless East could win a trick in Spades. West thereupon made the Ace of Spades and continued that suit. South won, cashed in the Diamond trick, and then stuck East in with the last Spade, compelling him to lose a Heart trick, the Declarant making two Clubs, two Diamonds, two Spades and one Heart.

While it may strike some players that the success of this hand is predicated upon indifferent defense, I would state that the East and West players defending this hand were not only fine players, but two of the acknowledged leading bridge experts in America.

A rather neat hand, where indifferent play either way of the table, would throw the game to the opposition, is illustrated in the following deal:

♠ A J 7
♥ 10 6 5
♦ 10 9 5 4 3 2
♣ 8

♠ Q 8 3
♥ Q J 8 4 2
♦ 8 6
♣ K 7 5



♠ K 10 9 5
♥ A 9 7 3
♦ J
♣ A 6 4 2

♠ 6 4 2
 ♥ K
 ♦ A K Q 7
 ♣ Q J 10 9 3

South deals and bids a Diamond, West passes and North makes a jump-bid of four Diamonds. It will be noted that the North hand contains but one quick trick and under such conditions a Jump-bid is usually sound strategy. East could make game playing the hand at Hearts, if the play was double dummy, but played naturally, the finesse in Hearts would permit South to make the singleton King and save the game. However, the play at Diamonds was very pretty and careless play by West permitted South to win the game. The Heart was opened and East won with the Ace, felling the King. South ruffed the second Heart and led the low Club. The eight in dummy looked very innocuous and West did not go up with the King, knowing that South would not underlead the Ace with only one in the dummy. East was forced to play the Ace to win the trick and led another Heart.

which South trumped and then led one round of trumps, followed by the Queen of Clubs. Whether West covers or not is immaterial, two Spade discards will be obtained on the Club suit. If South had made the fatal error of taking two rounds of trumps, instead of one, he would have succeeded in setting up the Clubs and then been left without a card of reëntry to bring in the suit. Of course, if West had played the King of Clubs on the first round of the suit it would have saved the game against any line of play.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

WHEN IT PAYS TO PASS

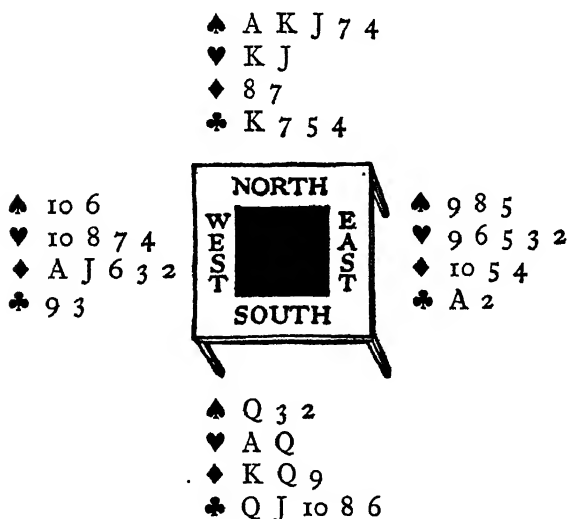
NOW that most of the experts have accepted the four-card suit bids as a winning convention, some players are advocating the take-out of partner's No Trump bid, under certain conditions, with a four-card suit. The take-out is made when the rescuing hand holds a good four-card suit and an indifferent suit of five cards. If the opportunity is given, both suits are shown, precisely as if the hand were a two-suiter of five cards each. When the distribution is three four-card suits and a singleton, two, and at times, the three suits are bid.

While undoubtedly, this sort of so-called advanced bidding will sometimes turn out to be winning play, I believe in the long run it will prove to be more of a detriment than an advantage.

When the partner of a No Trump bidder has shown two suits, it requires an exceptional hand—or an exceptional player—to take the bid back to No Trumps. That a hand will play to greater advantage at a trump make, when holding a sound two-suiter, is an established fact. If, however, the take-out is on a suit of only four cards and the cards do not “fit in,” then many a game-going hand at No Trumps is thrown for a loss at a trump make. There are a great number of hands where nine tricks can be made at No Trumps or at a suit make. At No Trumps this means the game, while at a suit make on a love score, it means practically nothing.

Possibly even more fatal is the rescue of the partner's major-suit, when holding excellent support in the bid suit. In the minor suits, where eleven tricks are required to make the game, a No Trump take-out, even with strength in the bid suit, is decidedly proper, but I can see little excuse for the player who jumps to a No Trump bid, when he holds more than normal support for the partner's Spade or Heart Bid. Even if the partner has bid a four-card suit, three good trumps and strong side cards is not a justifiable No Trump take-out.

Playing in a duplicate game, a score of 20 points was made on a certain deal at many tables while others scored 210 points. It appeared as if a poor play had been perpetrated. When the board was produced it was found that the play had been perfect, but—"with every suit stopped twice, who would not bid a No Trump on this hand?"



North had the deal and bid a Spade, East passed and sitting in the South position, I bid two Spades. While this jump bid had little significance, it might prevent a weak Heart bid, and possibly help towards getting a slam if North held a four-card Diamond suit and could get a Heart discard. However, there was absolutely no play in the hand. The enemy secured their two Aces and we took in eleven tricks and scored 40 honors. The veriest novice could not have done less. At the tables where the South players went to No Trumps, that bid won the contract. The three of Diamonds was led and the ten forced the Queen. After the five Spades were cashed in, East obtained the lead with the Ace of Clubs and four Diamond tricks saved the game, the Declarant making eight tricks and scoring 20 points only. The most remarkable part of the performance was the unanimity of opinion among the South players that the hand was a proper take-out of the partner's Spade bid, with one of No Trumps.

Another bidding hand that was the outstanding feature of a duplicate match played at Hartford, Conn., was the following:

	♠ 6		
	♥ A Q 9 5 4 2		
	♦ 10 9 6 3		
	♣ 7 4		
♠ K 9 7	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ A 4 3	
♥ 10		♥ 8	
♦ 8 7		♦ A K Q J 5 2	
♣ A K Q J 9 6 2		♣ 10 8 5	
	♠ Q J 10 8 5 2		
	♥ K J 7 6 3		
	♦ 4		
	♣ 3		

East was the dealer and bid one Diamond. South bid a Spade, West two Clubs and North two Hearts. When North showed Hearts, South at once abandoned the Spades and supported his partner to four Hearts. West assisted to five Diamonds, which North doubled. To this point the bidding is conventional. West, after his partner has gone to four without assistance, has one raise for him. North has every right to expect a Spade trick with his partner and at least one ruff in his hand. The onus is thrown entirely upon the South player.

He knows his hand will produce no quick tricks and furthermore, his Heart suit is so long that the very first round of the suit is likely to be trumped. The bidding would tend to show that both the minor suits are solid with the opponents and if they can win the first trick they will probably score a slam. I held the South hand

and bid five Hearts, which, fortunately, we were permitted to play undoubled and were set for one trick, less four honors, a loss of 10 points.

At the table where the second high score was made, the South player passed the five Diamonds doubled, but West, not satisfied to let well enough alone, redoubled. South now awoke to the emergency and bid five Hearts, which was doubled, but the bid, nevertheless, saved hundreds of points. At another table, the deal was played at five Clubs, doubled and redoubled and the singleton Spade being opened, a Grand Slam was scored. The loss here was 720 points, most of which could have been saved if South had continued on with the Heart bid. At four tables the "redouble" was made by the fourth player—when a pass would have closed the bidding—and in every instance but one, the opponents went back to their suit, where the loss was negligible. The curious thing is that in no case did the East and West players bid up to six, which they could have made without trouble.

The moral of this hand is apparent. Don't redouble, even when the contract is reasonably safe, unless the enemy have no avenue of escape.

CHAPTER EIGHTY-ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL CARDS

THERE is nothing of more importance than noting the little cards—the deuces and treys—in an Auction Bridge game.

The Aces and Kings are big enough to look out for themselves, while the little fellows require the careful guidance of their guardians, before they can grow into able-bodied, healthy tricks.

To take in a trick with a deuce, is a simple matter, when everybody has followed to three rounds of the suit and the card is known to be the last one out—a “thirteener.” But when the player holds a six or a seven and is aware that one or more cards of that suit still remain unplayed, then a player is marked with unusual ability if he knows that the card he holds is the best one out. It is humiliating, as well as debasing, to endeavor to draw the opponents ten of trumps with the eight, especially when the winner of the trick holds a set-up suit. When the expert makes a *faux-pas* of this kind he usually smiles cheerfully and remarks: “Partner, I was throwing the lead.” Of course, nobody believes him, least of all his partner, but sometimes a poor excuse covers a multitude of lost tricks.

The following hand was played at fifteen tables in a duplicate game:

♠ J 9
 ♥ J 9 6 5 4
 ♦ 8 7 4
 ♣ 9 8 5

♠ A 10 7 5 2
 ♥ A Q
 ♦ J 5
 ♣ Q 10 3 2

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ K 8
 ♥ K 8 7 2
 ♦ Q 9 3
 ♣ A K J 6

♠ Q 6 4 3
 ♥ 10 3
 ♦ A K 10 6 2
 ♣ 7 4

I had the deal in the South position and bid a Diamond, which West overcalled with a Spade and secured the contract. A Diamond was opened and three rounds played, the Declarant discarding a Club on the last round. Now the King of Spades, followed by the eight, which West won with the Ace. In an endeavor to "bump" the trumps the Declarant led the ten which I won with the Queen and forced Declarant with a Diamond. On the first two leads of Spades I had played the four and six, so I now had left the three, while West held the seven. If Declarant draws my trump he has a lay down for ten tricks and the game, but he has misgivings as to whether his trump is the top or not. He knows that there is another trump out and that the six fell under his Ace, so he is rather dubious as to the status of his seven. After a moment of suspense, he played the Ace and Queen of Hearts, put

the dummy in with a Club and led the King of Hearts. Had I ruffed that card the fact that my trump was a loser would have been disclosed and the game would have been lost, as Declarant can overruff and make the rest of the tricks. Instead I discarded a Club and made my trump on the following Club lead, holding the opponents down to three odd tricks.

It is curious how many situations arise in a Bridge game that cannot be covered by textbooks or expert advice. Recently, I saw a game lost, that might have been saved, more by horse-sense than by so-called card sense.

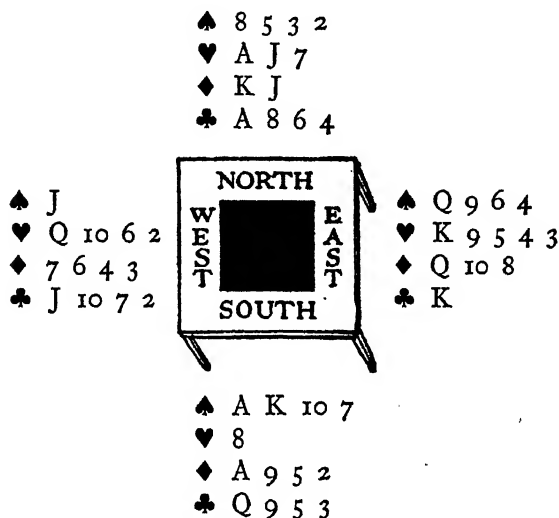
	♠ 7 4		
	♥ A K 10 9 7 3		
	♦ 9 7 4 3		
	♣ 2		
♠ Q J 10 5 3 2			♠ A 9 8 6
♥ Q 2			♥ J 5
♦ K J 10 5			♦ A Q
♣ 9			♣ J 8 6 5 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>WEST EAST</p> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>		
	♠ K		
	♥ 8 6 4		
	♦ 8 6 2		
	♣ A K Q 10 7 3		

South dealt and bid a Club, West showed the Spades and North overcalled with two Hearts. East and South supported their partners, but West landed the contract at four Spades. The play of the hand seemed rather sim-

ple, the Declarant making the contract with little difficulty. North played two rounds of Hearts and finding the third Heart with his partner, switched to the Club. South, playing after the exposed dummy, could have won with the ten, but put up the Ace and returned the three of Clubs. The Clubs are all in sight to South, but the player endeavors to disguise the situation and permit North to get in a trump, which would defeat the contract.

West, however, was not to be fooled and trumped with the ten which was much too big for North to beat. Now the Ace of Spades dropped the lone King and the game was over. The point of this hand is for South to try and make the singleton King of Spades. It is apparent that West will endeavor to shut North out from making a little trump on the Club lead, if the bidding is borne in mind. When South wins the third trick, either a Diamond or a Heart should be led so as not to permit the Declarant to definitely locate the King of Spades with South. Unless West holds seven Spades, the finesse is a "natural" and will probably be taken. As the hand was played, while West could not know that South's King of Spades was unguarded, he did know it was not in the North hand and took the only chance to win the game.

The following very pretty hand is a good example of what can be accomplished by close application to the fall of the cards:



South dealt and secured the contract with a bid of one Spade. The two of Hearts was the opening lead, which dummy won with the Ace. It is at once apparent that nothing is to be gained by attempting a suit finesse. Even should the finesse in Diamonds be successful, a Club discard could hardly be of much value. The best chance is to play for the long Club suit as, unless that suit is establishable, there can be no object in getting the opposing trumps out. When the Ace of Clubs catches the lone King, then the deal commences to lend itself to an accurate count. West has shown a four-card Heart suit by the lead of the two. He is now marked with exactly four Clubs when his partner's King falls. The third lead is the King of Diamonds, and the eight of Diamonds from East, shows four Diamonds with West, unless East is playing a false-card. The following lead of the Jack of

Diamonds is covered by the Queen, won with the Ace and the low Diamond ruffed in dummy. When the ten is played by East, every card is infallibly located. Dummy leads a Heart, which Declarant ruffs with the low trump, leads the King of Spades and on the next lead of the nine of Diamonds, dummy discards the remaining Heart. East trumps and has nothing left to lead but a Heart or a Spade. On the Heart lead, South discards a Club, ruffs in dummy and finesses the trump for a total of eleven tricks. The Spade lead by East away from his tenace position, will save one trick, but four odd is nevertheless enough to win the game. It will be noted that the Declarant took no finesses on this deal, until every card was definitely located. Playing this deal by brute force and taking a second round of trumps when the Jack drops on the first round, will work out for the loss of the game, unless the adversaries are unable to offer proper defense. To rely upon mistakes of the opponents, is always a precarious way to win a rubber.

CHAPTER EIGHTY-TWO

TAKING A CHANCE

THE perennial question, as to the relative importance of the bidding and play at Auction Bridge, has been a bone of contention among card players for many years.

It may be erroneously surmised that I believe the preponderance of virtue is with the player. The two integral parts are so interwoven and inseparable that a person's ability as a player can only be correctly judged from his combined knowledge. We often hear: "He plays the cards well, but his bidding is unreliable," or, "his bidding is sound but he loses lots of tricks on his play." The extent of a player's deficiency in either branch of the game marks the limit of his success as a winning player.

I do believe, however, that the good player is in a better position to quickly graduate into the expert class. Only two things stand in his way, incredulity and obstinacy. He must learn to believe his opponents—sometimes—and his partners—often! The knowledge that he plays the cards well is not quite sufficient reason for playing every hand. It is occasionally better and certainly more profitable, to permit the partner to make three-odd at Clubs, than to be set at No Trumps. Any person with a natural aptitude for playing cards should find Bridge an easy game to learn and a game that amply rewards one for the amount of study involved.

Correct bidding permits the partners to play a deal at the best make that is contained in the combined hands. Correct playing permits the culmination of the contract undertaken. Both factors are of equal importance.

Occasionally bad bidding or incorrect play on the part of the enemy, makes the going very hard for the opposition. It is rare, however, that perfect procedure by the player will not locate the flaw in the opponents' defense. The following hand is a good illustration:

		♠ A Q 8		
		♥ Q 6 2		
		♦ J 6 3		
		♣ K 8 7 5		
♠ J 10 9 7 3				♠ K
♥ K 10				♥ 9 7 5 4 3
♦ 10 8 5				♦ K 9 4
♣ Q J 3				♣ 9 6 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E SOUTH </div>			
		♠ 6 5 4 2		
		♥ A J 8		
		♦ A Q 7 2		
		♣ A 10		

South as dealer bid a No Trump, West, one of the "pusher" type of players, bid two Spades. If North had doubled this inexcusable bid it would have been defeated for three or four hundred points. A bid of this sort is always bad because, if the opponents double, the bidder has no escape. If the balance of the suit is with the part-

ner, then the enemy are needlessly warned to switch to a suit that may land them the game. With such a hand as West holds, it is practically impossible to make the game against an opposing No Trump, unless the partner has sufficient strength to make a directive bid or an informative double.

In this instance, however, North elected to bid two No Trumps, which closed the bidding. South played the hand "naturally," as he said, and was set for one trick, to the intense joy of West, who claimed full credit for driving the opponents beyond their depths.

"Boy, page the swimming-master!"

West opened the Jack of Spades, which was covered by the Queen, the Declarant marking the lead from the King-Jack-ten. East won with the singleton King and returned the four of Hearts, South played low, West winning with the King and clearing the Spades. Now the Jack of Diamonds was led, covered by the King and Ace and the Declarant was held down to seven tricks—one Spade and two in each of the other suits.

Played correctly, this hand is good not merely for the contract, but for the game!

While the Declarant is justified in believing the King of Spades is with the Spade bidder, what can be gained by playing the Queen on the first trick? If West has the King and holds the trick, any suit he switches to should be most pleasing to the Declarant. If West continues the Spades, then the finesse cannot lose, as East is marked out. So, the Spade bid instead of being detrimental to the Declarant, should really be of help to him. However, East having but one Spade, would be compelled to overtake the Jack and the Heart would be led as before. When West wins with the King, he can

continue the Hearts or play a Spade—the result will be the same. A low Diamond should be led and the Queen finessed. Not holding the ten of Diamonds the best chance is, to find the King once guarded with East. As the cards lie, a Diamond trick must be given to East, but two tricks each in Spades, Hearts and Clubs, and three in Diamonds are sufficient for the game.

A hand where the player was forced to delve somewhat into superauction to land the game, was the following one:

		♠ J 10 6 5	
		♥ K Q 5	
		♦ A K Q 4 2	
		♣ 2	
♠ K Q 2			♠ 9 8 7 3
♥ 9 7 2			♥ J 8 6 3
♦ J 10 9 7 6			♦ 8
♣ K Q			♣ A 7 6 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH W E S T SOUTH </div>		
		♠ A 4	
		♥ A 10 4	
		♦ 5 3	
		♣ J 10 9 8 5 3	

It is rather curious that at thirteen tables of duplicate play, only one player succeeded in making game on this deal.

North was the dealer and bid a Diamond, East passed and South's No Trump bid secured the contract. West opened the Jack of Diamonds, which was the correct

lead, notwithstanding that the suit was bid by the opponent. The Declarant can count exactly seven tricks in sight, with an extra trick in Spades if that suit happens to break well. The game-going trick is apparently not in the hand, as the long Club suit, while capable of establishment, is one reëntry short of bringing it in.

There is better than an even chance, however, that the ten of Hearts can be made the needed reëntry. East played the eight of Diamonds on the first lead, marking him with a singleton in the suit. The supposition is fair that he holds at least four Hearts. That being so, his partner can hold but three and therefore the chances are four to three that the Jack of Hearts is in the East hand. After winning the first Diamond and leading the two of Clubs, the second Diamond trick is won and a low Heart led. The finesse of the ten will enable the Declarant to force out the King of Clubs, leaving him still the two Aces to clear and bring in the suit. Four odd tricks at No Trump were made on this hand by accepting the only possible chance.

CHAPTER EIGHTY-THREE

AGAINST PERFECT DEFENSE

TO become expert at any line of effort, without constant practice against the leading exponents of the art to be acquired, is almost an unsurmountable task. A fine player of any game, whether it be golf, tennis or bridge, may easily be the best in his immediate community and looked upon by his townsmen as quite invincible. It is sometimes difficult for such a player to comprehend that his success is based, not so much upon his own perfect play, as it is upon the weak and incorrect defense of the opposition.

Recently I sat watching a tennis match in a rather important tournament, where a clever young player was taking a bad beating from one of our ranking performers. A friend of his was seated next to me and seemed much depressed at the exhibition. "Really," he remarked, "I never saw him play such a poor game. None of his good shots are coming off to-day."

It was very likely that the young man was playing as well as he ever did and his non-success was entirely due to the superior ability of his opponent. So, at Bridge a player may meet with great success by overbidding his cards and saving games at a small sacrifice. Against more experienced adversaries, he is doubled and forced to take large penalties that continually put him on the wrong side of the ledger. Curiously enough, when this

happens, the player is not "off his game." He is simply unfortunate in not being able to hold anything. It would be impossible to enumerate the number of bridge hands that appear to win the game on account of fine play by the Declarant, when it really is poor play by the defense.

The following hand was won by the South player, who modestly tried to bear up under his partner's complimentary remark, "Very well played."

		♠ Q 10 4	
		♥ 7 5 3	
		♦ Q 6 2	
		♣ A Q 9 5	
♠ A 5 2			♠ 9 7 6
♥ K Q 10 8 6			♥ 9 2
♦ J 10 8 4			♦ K 9 7 5
♣ 8			♣ J 7 4 2
	<div> <div>NORTH</div> <div>WEST</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>SOUTH</div> </div>		
		♠ K J 8 3	
		♥ A J 4	
		♦ A 3	
		♣ K 10 6 3	

The deal was with West, who bid a Heart. North and East passing, South called a No Trump, which secured the contract. The King of Hearts was opened and held the first trick, East playing the two and South the four. On the Heart continuation South won and led a low Club. It is always proper play, when holding three top honors on two hands, to play the first honor from the

hand that holds two. This is done so that if a finesse is necessary, either because one opponent renounces or the fall of the cards makes it appear that the suit may be stopped by the enemy, that the finesse can be taken either way. It is apparent on this hand, if the King instead of a low Club is led, that the suit must be stopped by East. When the eight is played by West, that player probably holds the Jack or no more, so dummy plays the two high honors and the finesse is established against East. After the Clubs are made, the Spades are set up and the Declarant gathers in ten tricks for the game—and a trick to spare.

A bit of close study will show that the Declarant played this hand abominably and was successful only because the defense played worse. There can be no fault found with the bidding or the opening lead. When the first trick is held by the King, West errs badly by falling into the trap and continuing the suit. If East held either the Ace or the Jack of Hearts, the high honor should be played on the partner's King. West should not open an honor against the No Trump unless he held three, and it is East's duty to show him where the missing honor is. If he held the Jack, he should play it and his refusal to do so, marks it definitely with the enemy. West's proper play is to switch on the second trick and the Jack of Diamonds is the card to switch to. On this line of play the Declarant must be held down to but eight tricks—one short of game.

If this hand is played properly by South, it does not require contributory negligence on the part of the enemy to win the game. That the hold-up of the Ace of Hearts will not prevail against sound play, should be apparent. The probable switch will be to a Diamond and

if the King is with East, the game cannot be won. The danger of East obtaining the lead and coming through the guarded Jack of Hearts is obvious, but that danger is more fancied than real. Getting back to fundamentals, a player should hold two tricks to make an original bid. West has made such a bid and if he has bid soundly, the Ace of Spades is marked in his hand. He may, also, hold the King of Diamonds, but that card in itself is but half a trick and the balance of the high honors are with the Declarant and his dummy. Marking the location of the Ace of Spades permits the Declarant to win the first trick with the Ace of Hearts. Then the Ace, followed by the Queen of Clubs, shows the distribution of that suit. After the Clubs are run off, the Spade suit is cleared and the game is won irrespective of West's play. To force the game to a successful issue against the proper play of the adversaries is infinitely more satisfactory than relying upon the mistakes of the opposition and it would greatly benefit players who are somewhat above the standard of play in their own bailiwick, to try out their game of Bridge away from home.

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CHAPTER EIGHTY-FOUR

LUCK-CONFOUNDED

WHILE a great many hands in Auction lend themselves to brilliant and exceptional plays, it is nevertheless true that the vast majority seem to be quite simple and ordinary affairs. To the "hurry-up" player who quickly takes in his Aces and Kings and eagerly looks forward to the next deal, all hands are more or less prosaic. His great thrill comes when he holds a hundred Aces or all the honors in one suit. He takes a "natural finesse," which unfortunately loses and is quite sincere in his comment: "Tough luck, Partner, if the King were in the other hand, we would have made a sure game." That there is nearly always "something more" to most of the simplest appearing hands, is very hard for many Bridge players to understand. I have illustrated so many intricate and out-of-the-ordinary situations that it might be well to talk over a few of the simple hands that appear to play unfortunately. It is surprising the number of such deals that can be turned into game-going hands when the player uses his head for other than hat-rack purposes.

Possibly the commonest type of hand that appears uneventful, is where the contract is obtained without any competition from the adversaries. Aside from the knowledge that the missing high-card strength is probably not concentrated in one hand, the Declarant usually has little to aid him in locating the essential honors. It

is in such instances that a sound working insight of the fundamentals is of the utmost value to a player.

	♠ A 3 2	
	♥ 5 3	
	♦ A Q J 7 5 2	
	♣ J 7	
♠ K J 8 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> NORTH WEST EAST SOUTH </div>	♠ Q 7 6 5
♥ Q J 7		♥ K 10 4 2
♦ 8 6		♦ K 4
♣ Q 9 4 2		♣ 10 8 3
	♠ 10 9	
	♥ A 9 8 6	
	♦ 10 9 3	
	♣ A K 6 5	

North dealt and bid a Diamond, which was passed by East, and South's No Trump call secured the contract. The opening lead of the four of Spades was won by East with the Queen and after considerable thought, the two of Hearts was returned. The switch to Hearts held the Declarant to eight tricks, one short of game. Of course, if West had held the King of Diamonds, there would have been ten tricks in the hand, but with the King on the wrong side, the game was out of the question—after the second lead. The Declarant's reasoning, that he should hold up the Ace of Spades until the third round because the Diamond finesse must be taken into East's hand, is entirely sophistical. If the opening lead is sound, the game can be won against any dis-

tribution of the cards! The lead of the four against a No Trump declaration, with the three and two in sight, shows exactly a four-card suit. The leader would not play low from a King-Queen-Jack combination, so the partner must have one of those honors. After winning the first trick, East can see that but two more tricks are possible for their partnership in Spades and the lead of a Heart is practically obligatory. It is obvious to the Declarant that such a switch will prevent him from winning the game, and the Ace of Spades should be immediately played to the very first trick. The enemy have but three Spade tricks to make in any event and if the King of Diamonds is in the East hand, it must win, but three-odd tricks are quite sufficient to land the game. After the first trick is won in dummy, South obtains the lead with the Clubs and tries the Diamond finesse. It may be argued that my statement that the game can be won against any distribution is rather broad, as if East held all four Diamonds and refused to win the first or second round, the game might still be saved. Such a distribution would be impossible, if the first lead is proper. If East held all four Diamonds, West would be void of the suit. Holding a void suit, West must have a suit of at least five cards, which he denies on his opening lead. It should be noted on this hand that if the enemy had gone blithely on with the Spades until the Ace was forced to win the trick, the unsound play of the Declarant would have been glossed over and unnoticed. It is only when playing against the best defense that errors of this kind show up so glaringly.

A hand where unexpected and unfortunate distribution of the cards seemed to be responsible for the loss of the game, is the following:

♠ A 9 2
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 9 8 6 4
 ♣ 9 7 5 4 2

♠ K 4
 ♥ Q J 8 5 4
 ♦ Q J 3
 ♣ A Q 10

NORTH
 WEST EAST
 SOUTH

♠ 8 5
 ♥ A K 10
 ♦ 10 7 5 2
 ♣ K J 6 3

♠ Q J 10 7 6 3
 ♥ 9 7 6 2
 ♦ A K
 ♣ 8

South had the deal and his bid of a Spade was proper, with his compensating tricks in Diamonds. West bid two Hearts and North raised to two Spades. It is a close question as to whether North has a sound assist on the first round of bidding, but his singleton in the adverse suit makes the hand appear very helpful. East called three Hearts and South went to three Spades. West persisted to four Hearts—which can be made on a Spade opening—but South went to four Spades, after North and East passed. This bid was doubled by West and passed all around. The five of Hearts was opened and it was a distinct shock to West when the Ace of Spades appeared in the dummy. East won with the King of Hearts, the deuce falling Fourth Hand. East could count the Declarant with three Hearts remaining. On the rule of eleven, there must be six Hearts higher than the five—

three of which are with East. With three trumps in dummy the Declarant will doubtless ruff his losing Hearts, if he is permitted to, so East leads the eight of Spades, South putting up the Queen and the King goes to the Ace. Putting his hand in with the Diamonds, South ruffs two Hearts, losing one Heart and one Club at the end, but succeeds in making his doubled contract. If East had not led the trumps, the Declarant would have ruffed three Hearts, but the King of Spades would have been made by West, with the same result. East's play was correct, but West erred deplorably in putting up the King of Spades. No good can possibly be accomplished by going up with the King, and if South has two Hearts to ruff in dummy, he must be forced to ruff one with the Ace, permitting West to make the King and defeating the contract for a trick.

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THE NEW YORK THEATREGOERS PRIZE
BRIDGE CONTEST PROBLEMS AND
SOLUTIONS

THE NEW YORK THEATREGOERS PRIZE BRIDGE CONTEST

Double Dummy Problems are played with all the cards exposed and it is not necessary to "guess" or "infer" the position of the cards. Hence, the result must be obtained against *perfect defense*. By perfect defense is meant any and all defenses that the adversaries may offer. A Bridge Problem can have but one correct solution. The variations given show the play against alternative methods of defense, but usually the best defense is that first shown.

The Twenty-Four Problems following were published in over sixty of the leading New York Theatre Programs, in two series of twelve, one Problem appearing each week. Prizes were given for the best solution of each Problem and at the conclusion of the first series the three leading contestants were awarded special prizes—the winner receiving a Gold Medal emblematic of the New York Theatregoers' Bridge Championship.

Of the thousands of replies received, only six succeeded in correctly answering all of the first twelve Problems.

The Perfect Solvers were:

Robert C. Myles, Jr.
Ernest King Weil
John L. Steinbugler
Miss Josephine Flood
Paul S. Zuckerman
James Frederick Tanner

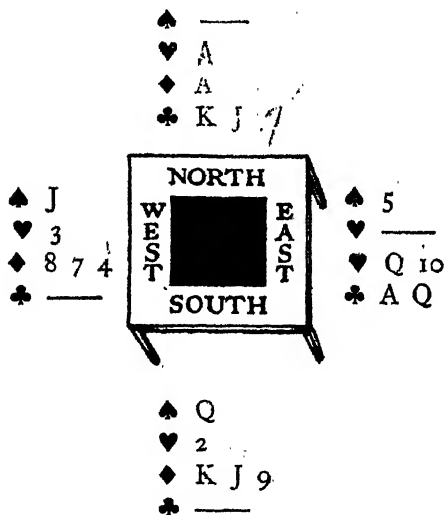
Under the conditions of the contest, Mr. Myles won the First Prize, Mr. Weil, Second, and Mr. Steinbugler, Third.

The solutions published are those of the individual Problem winners and the figures after the Problem numbers, are the percentage of correct replies received to that Problem.

SIDNEY S. LENZ

PROBLEM NUMBER ONE

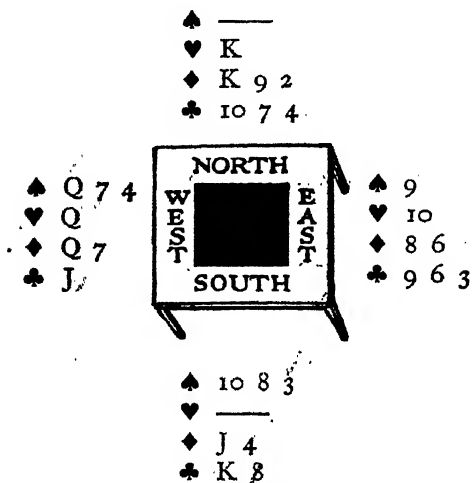
(Of the answers sent in, 38 per cent were correct)



Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win four of the five tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWO

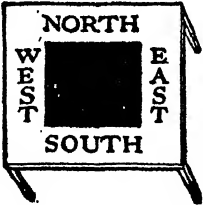
(Of the answers sent in, 32 per cent were correct)



Diamonds are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER THREE

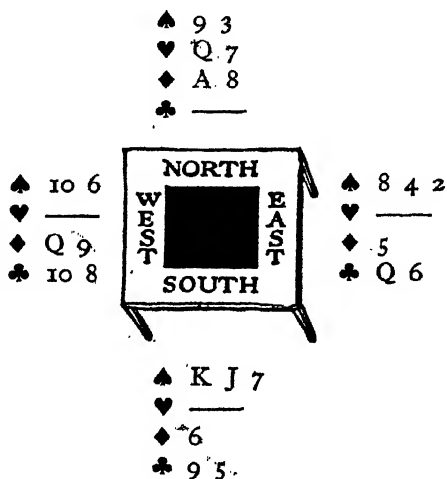
(Of the answers sent in, 28 per cent were correct)

<p>♠ A J 5 4</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ 7 5</p> <p>♣ 10</p>	<p>♠ K</p> <p>♥ K Q J 7</p> <p>♦ —</p> <p>♣ J 3</p>	<p>♠ —</p> <p>♥ 10 8</p> <p>♦ A Q</p> <p>♣ K 9 7</p>
		
<p>♠ Q 3</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ K J</p> <p>♣ Q 8 2</p>		

Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER FOUR

(Of the answers sent in, 17 per cent were correct)

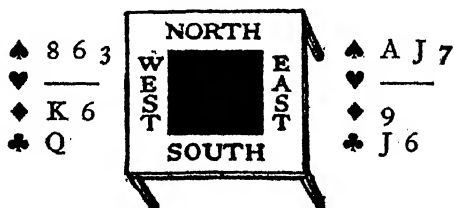


Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all six tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER FIVE

(Of the answers sent in, 9 per cent were correct)

♠ K 9
♥ —
♦ A 10 8 2
♣ —

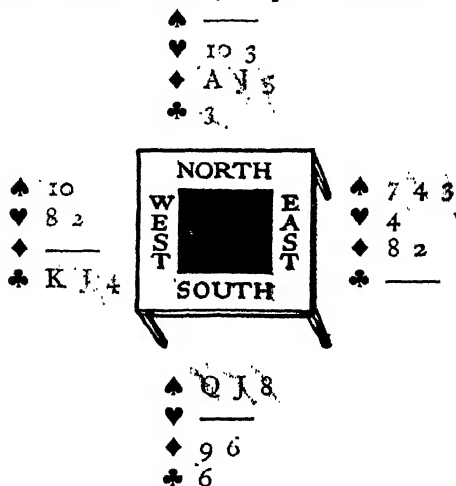


♠ Q 10 5
♥ 5
♦ 5 3
♣ —

Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win four of the six tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER SIX

(Of the answers sent in, 16 per cent were correct)



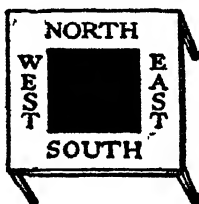
Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win five of the six tricks, against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER SEVEN

(Of the answers sent in, 8 per cent were correct)

♠ J 8 3
♥ 3 2
♦ —
♣ A 2

♠ —
♥ Q 10
♦ Q 3
♣ Q 5 3

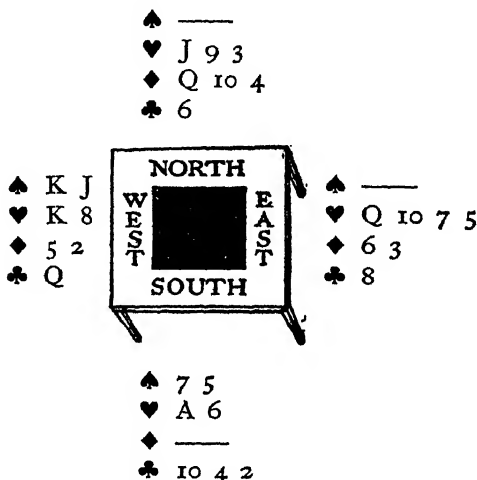


♠ 5
♥ J 9 7
♦ —
♣ 10 8 7

♠ 7
♥ K
♦ K 5
♣ J 9 6

Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

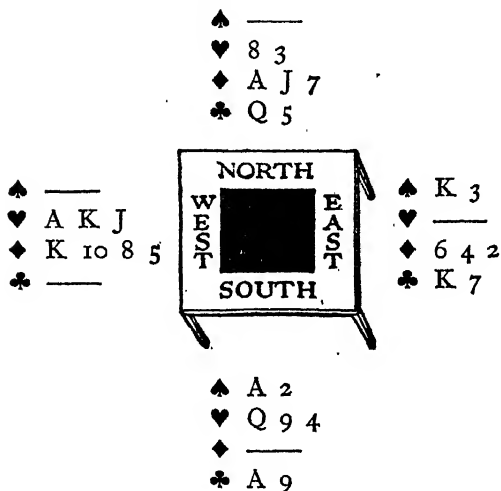
PROBLEM NUMBER EIGHT

(Of the answers sent in, 12 per cent were correct)

Diamonds are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win four of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER NINE

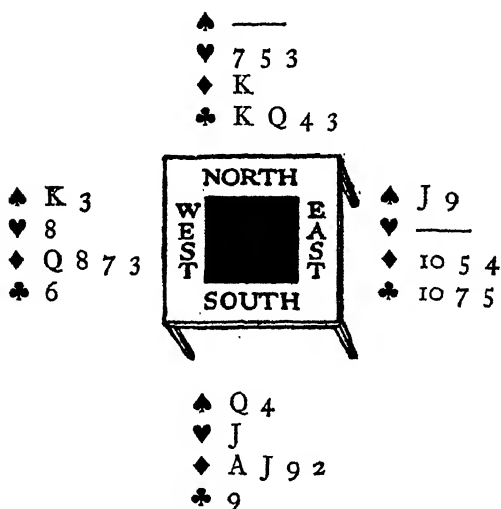
(Of the answers sent in, 14 per cent were correct)



Clubs are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TEN

(Of the answers sent in, 9 per cent were correct)



Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all eight tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER ELEVEN

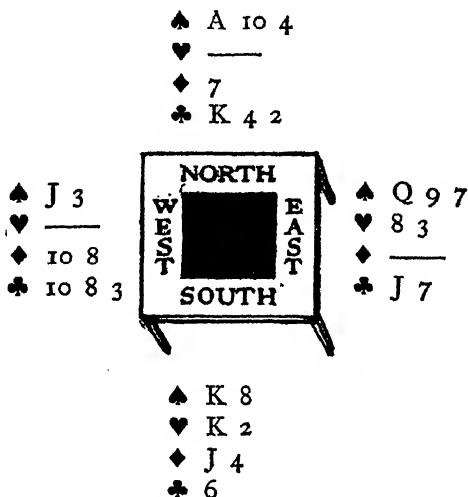
(Of the answers sent in, 26 per cent were correct)

<p>♠ A J ♥ — ♦ 9 7 5 3 ♣ Q</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">NORTH</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WEST</div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl;">EAST</div> </div> <p style="margin: 0;">SOUTH</p> </div>	<p>♠ K 10 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ 8 ♣ 8</p>
<p>♠ Q 9 7 5 ♥ Q ♦ 10 ♣ 7</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ A J 5 4 ♦ A K 6 ♣ —</p>	

Clubs are Trumps. South has the Lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWELVE

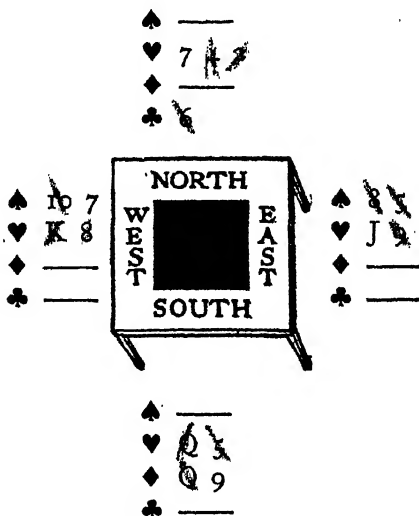
(Of the answers sent in, 3 per cent were correct)



There are No Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER THIRTEEN

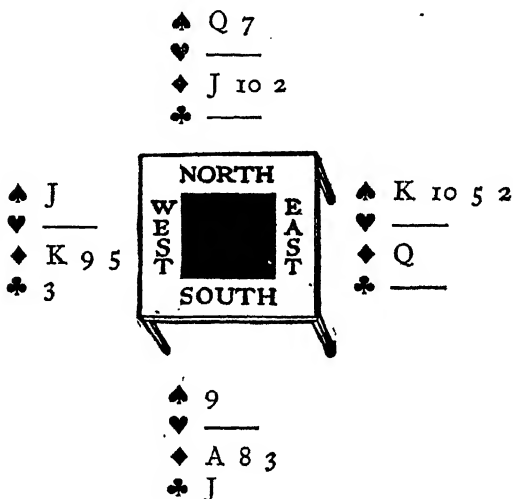
(Of the answers sent in, 47 per cent were correct)



Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win two of the four tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER FOURTEEN

(Of the answers sent in, 39 per cent were correct)

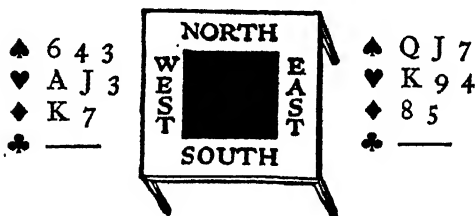


Clubs are Trumps, South has the lead. North and South must win three of the five tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER FIFTEEN

(Of the answers sent in, 12 per cent were correct)

♠ 10 9 8 2
♥ 8
♦ A 10 6
♣ —

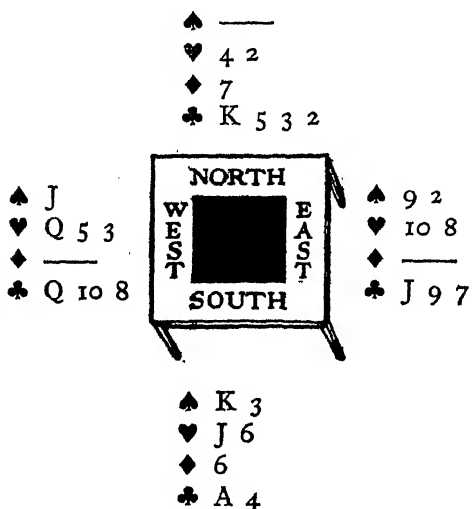


♠ A K 5
♥ Q 10 6
♦ J 4
♣ —

Diamonds are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win seven of the eight tricks against *any* defense by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER SIXTEEN

(Of the answers sent in, 13 per cent were correct)



Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win five of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER SEVENTEEN

(Of the answers sent in, 7 per cent were correct)

<p>♠ A K J</p> <p>♥ A Q</p> <p>♦ 9 7 4 3 2</p> <p>♣ —</p>	<p>♠ Q 7 5 4</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ A Q J 10</p> <p>♣ 10 8</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>NORTH</p> <div style="display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> <p>WEST</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; background-color: black; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <p>EAST</p> </div> <p>SOUTH</p> </div>	<p>♠ 9</p> <p>♥ 8 7 4</p> <p>♦ 8 6 5</p> <p>♣ 7 4 3</p>
<p>♠ 10 8 6 3 2</p> <p>♥ J 9 6 3</p> <p>♦ K</p> <p>♣ —</p>			

Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win eight of the ten tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER EIGHTEEN

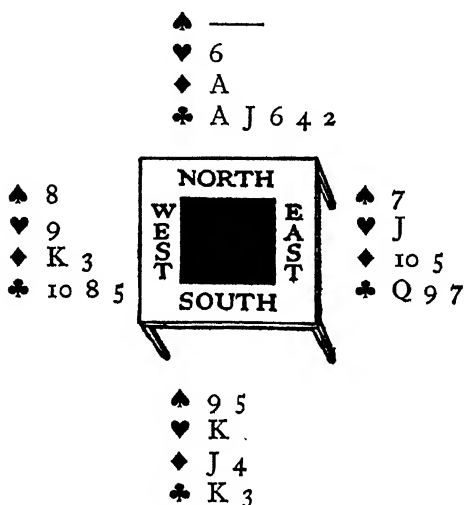
(Of the answers sent in, 6 per cent were correct)

<p>♠ —</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ J 7</p> <p>♣ A K J 9 8 6</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: 150px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">NORTH</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> WEST <div style="background-color: black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> EAST </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">SOUTH</p> </div>	<p>♠ 9 7 4</p> <p>♥ 7 4</p> <p>♦ 10 6 2</p> <p>♣ —</p> <p>♠ Q 10</p> <p>♥ Q</p> <p>♦ Q 9 4</p> <p>♣ 5 3</p> <p>♠ 6 5</p> <p>♥ K 6</p> <p>♦ A K 8</p> <p>♣ Q</p>
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Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the eight tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER NINETEEN

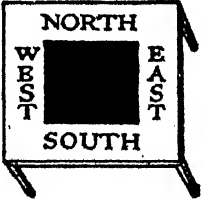
(Of the answer sent in, 12 per cent were correct)



Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-ONE

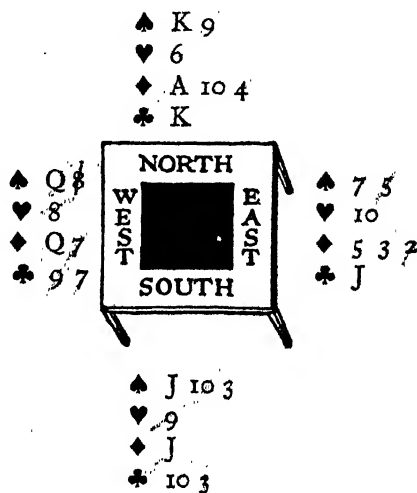
(Of the answers sent in, 11 per cent were correct)

<p>♠ K</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ J 8 7 4 3</p> <p>♣ 5</p>	<p>♠ A 7</p> <p>♥ K 7 5 3</p> <p>♦ A</p> <p>♣ —</p>	<p>♠ 6</p> <p>♥ Q J 9 6</p> <p>♦ —</p> <p>♣ K 9</p>
		
<p>♠ 4</p> <p>♥ 2</p> <p>♦ Q 9 6</p> <p>♣ A Q</p>		

Spades are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-TWO

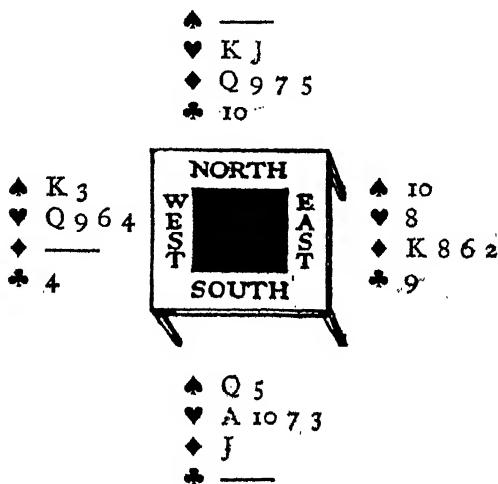
(Of the answers sent in, 4 per cent were correct)



Clubs are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win all seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-THREE

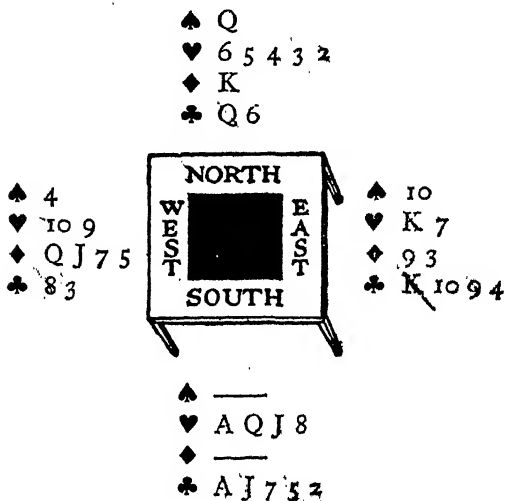
(Of the answers sent in, 6 per cent were correct)



Hearts are Trumps. South has the lead. North and South must win six of the seven tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

(Of the answers sent in, 1 per cent were correct)



Spades are Trumps, South has the lead. North and South must win eight of the nine tricks against *any defense* by East and West.

PROBLEM NUMBER ONE

Winning Solution by J. W. Meader

South draws the Trumps, North discarding the ace of Hearts; South follows with the lead of the Heart deuce, on which North throws his Ace of Diamonds.

West must now lead a Diamond, and South takes the remaining tricks.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWO

Winning Solution by Robert C. Myles, Jr.

South leads the ten of Spades, West plays the Queen, North trumps with the two. (If West plays a small Spade instead of the Queen, North would discard a Club, then North and South would take three Diamonds, a Heart and two Club tricks.)

North leads the King of Hearts and South trumps with the Jack.

South leads the four of Diamonds, North overtakes whichever card West plays and leads trumps again. South discards the three of Spades.

North leads the four of Clubs, South wins with the King. South then makes his eight of Spades and leads his eight of Clubs to North's ten.

PROBLEM NUMBER THREE

Winning Solution by Josephine Flood

South leads Jack of Diamonds, which North trumps and then returns Jack of Clubs.

East as best defense plays low and South overtakes with Queen.

South leads King of Diamonds, which North trumps and follows with two Heart tricks; South discarding Clubs.

North's King of Spades is taken by West who is forced to lead up to good Queen of Spades in South's hand.

PROBLEM NUMBER FOUR

Winning Solution by John L. Steinbugler

1. South leads King of Spades, on which North plays nine.
2. South leads five of Clubs, which North trumps.
3. North leads Trump, forcing East to discard the losing Diamond (5). South discards six of Diamonds.
 - a) If West discards a Diamond, North makes two Diamond tricks and a Spade trick.
 - b) If West discards a Spade, North-South makes three tricks with Ace of Diamonds and lead of Spades through East.
 - c) Therefore West discards ten of Clubs.
4. North leads Ace of Diamonds, forcing East to discard either
 - a) a Spade, on which South discards the losing nine of Clubs and makes two remaining Spade tricks, or
 - b) if East discards the Queen of Clubs, South discards seven of Spades, making the two remaining tricks on North's lead of the three of Spades.

PROBLEM NUMBER FIVE

Winning Solution by Ernest K. Weil

South opens 3 ♦ West plays 6 and North takes trick with 10 (West's play here of K ♦ would be taken by A in North). North leads A ♦ East trumping with 7 and leading back Ace of Trump, North dropping King. East continues with Jack Trump, South taking trick with Queen and leading back 10 ♠ and 5 ♥ for last two tricks. East's lead of a Club on 4th trick would be trumped by North, and South's Queen and 10 of Trump would make last two tricks.

VARIATIONS

East's lead of Jack of Trump on third trick would go to North's King, North leading back a Diamond. If East trumps with Ace, his last Trump, South throws 5 ♥ and makes 2 Trumps. If East throws a Club South trumps with 10 and leads a Heart, West trumping, North overtrumping with 9 and East taking trick with Ace, South making last trick with Queen Trump.

East leads a Club on third trick and South throws 5 ♥ North trumping with 9 and leading back King of Trump. If East takes trick South makes last two tricks on Queen and ten of Trumps. Should East pass King of Trump North leads a Diamond and South must make either Queen or ten of Trump on 5th or 6th trick.

East's refusal to trump Diamond on second trick would lose, North retaining lead and playing Trump King. East must take with Ace of Trump as South would have to make a Trump trick on 4th or 5th trick. On East's taking home King with Ace, South holds tenace position over

Jack of Trump in East and makes 2 tricks on either a Club or Trump lead:

PROBLEM NUMBER SIX

Winning Solution by Mrs. William Barclay

Trick	West	North	East	South
1	♠ 10	♦ J	♠ 3	♠ Q *
2	♣ 4	♦ A	♠ 4	♠ J *
3	♣ J	♦ 5	♠ 7	♠ 8 *
4	♥ 8	♥ 10 *	♦ 2	♦ 6
5	♥ 2	♥ 3	♥ 4 *	♣ 6
6	♣ K	♣ 3	♦ 8	♦ 9 *

North was prepared to overtrump West on any trick, after which he would lead his second Trump.

To win five tricks, it was imperative that North unblock the Diamonds.

Had South led the nine of Diamonds on trick 4, East would have won the last two tricks.

PROBLEM NUMBER SEVEN

Winning Solution by James Frederick Tanner

South leads the five of Diamonds, North trumps with the eight, East discards the seven of Hearts. North leads the Ace of Clubs. North leads the trey of Spades, West discards the Queen of Diamonds. South leads King of Diamonds, West discards the ten of Hearts, North the deuce of Clubs, East the eight of Clubs. South leads Jack of Clubs, West covers with the Queen, North trumps,

and East's ten of Clubs falls. North leads a Heart which South takes with the King. South's nine of Clubs is good.

VARIATIONS

If to the fourth trick (the King of Diamonds) West discards a Club, South will next lead the nine of Clubs. West's lone Queen will be trumped, and South's Jack set up.

If to the fourth trick East discards a Heart, South will next lead the King of Hearts, thereby setting up a Heart trick in North's hand.

If to the fifth trick, West does not cover South's Jack of Clubs, the Jack will hold and North will discard a Heart.

PROBLEM NUMBER EIGHT

Winning Solution by Ralph West Roby

SOLUTION

South leads a Spade and North discards a Heart. West wins a Club trick and then leads a Heart which South wins with the Ace. South leads his Spade and North discards his remaining Heart. Any lead by West gives North the three remaining tricks.

COMMENT

In order for North and South to take four tricks the four of Diamonds must win a trick. This can be accomplished only by ruffing a suit in which East cannot over-ruff. It is necessary, therefore, for North to rid his hand of Hearts, which can be accomplished only by having two Spade leads before the second lead of Hearts.

PROBLEM NUMBER NINE

Winning Solution by Jeanne Ballot

South leads the Ace of Spades. West discards a Diamond. North trumps with the Queen and leads the five of Clubs, which South takes, West discarding the Jack of Hearts.

South leads his other Trump. West discards the King of Hearts and North the three of Hearts.

South leads the 2 of Spades. West discards the 8 of Diamonds, and North the 8 of Hearts, East taking with the King. East leads a Diamond and North makes his three Diamonds.

VARIATION

Should West discard the Ace of Hearts, North discards the seven of Diamonds on the 2 of Spades lead, keeping a Heart to lead to South's Queen.

PROBLEM NUMBER TEN

Winning Solution by A. F. Rose

South leads Q of Spades which West must cover and North trump.

North leads K of Diamonds which South overtakes with A.

South leads J of Diamonds which West must cover with Queen and North trumps.

North then leads his last Trump. If East discards his Spade South's four is good! If he discards his Diamond the nine is made and a Club discard gives all Club tricks to North.

South now makes either the Spade or Diamond trick depending on East's discard on previous trick. East must again decide between two discards which give North and South the remaining tricks.

If as variation West refuses to go up on either the first or third tricks North, of course, does not trump and the solution is simplified.

PROBLEM NUMBER ELEVEN

Winning Solution by Paul S. Zuckerman

South leads the Heart Ace, North discards the Spade Jack. South leads the Diamond six and West wins with the ten. West must lead a Spade or Club which North wins and South discards the Diamond Ace. North then leads the Spade or Club—whichever is left—South discards the Diamond King and North's three remaining Diamonds are good.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWELVE

Winning Solution by Donald F. Van Leuven

South leads the six of Clubs, North plays low, allowing East to win. East returns a Club, South discards the four of Diamonds and North's King wins. North leads his Diamond, East discards a Spade to protect his Hearts, and South wins; returning the King of Hearts. West discards a Diamond, and North, a Club. South now plays two rounds of Spades, North wins the second round and thus establishes his ten. Had East thrown a Heart on trick three, South would have made his second Heart, instead of establishing North's Spade.

LENZ ON BRIDGE, VOLUME TWO

VARIATIONS

East leads a Spade for trick two, South wins, plays King of Hearts, and follows with a Spade to North's. If East leads a Heart, South wins, plays a Spade then leads to North's Ace. In each instance South resigns his Jack of Diamonds for a reentry and West is forced, having to discard a Club or a Diamond, thus ending the three remaining tricks.

Should West play the eight spot on trick one in an attempt to win and lead a Diamond (which would lose battle for North and South), North covers with the King and returns his lowest Club, South discarding his lowest Diamond, and East must win or North's four of Clubs will be good. South now proceeds as in original play of hand and establishes either North's Spade or his small Heart.

PROBLEM NUMBER THIRTEEN

Winning Solution by Elizabeth A. Brown

South leads 5 of Hearts, throwing lead to East.

East's lead of Spades is trumped by North, South discarding Diamonds.

North's lead of Clubs forces high trump from West and secures final trick, either with South's Queen, if East holds on (3); or with remaining trump North, if East's King forces South's Queen, forcing West's King.

PROBLEM NUMBER FOURTEEN

Winning Solution by James Frederick Tanner

South leads the Jack of Clubs, North discards the

Jack of Diamonds. South leads the three of Diamonds, West plays the King, North unblocks by throwing the ten. West leads the Jack of Spades, which North refuses to cover. West is forced to lead up to South's tenace in Diamonds.

VARIATIONS

If, to the second trick, West plays low permitting East to win with Queen of Diamonds, North cannot be prevented from making the Queen of Spades.

If, to the third trick, East plays the King of Spades, overtaking West's Jack, North makes the Queen.

Should South open with the Ace of Diamonds followed by another Diamond, West, to the third trick, should lead the Jack of Spades which East should overtake and return the suit.

It is essential that North play Diamond honors to the first and second tricks in order to unblock the suit.

PROBLEM NUMBER FIFTEEN

Winning Solution by Mrs. Clayton DuBosque

South leads six of Hearts. East wins trick and leads a Heart, which North trumps. North leads ten of Spades, East covers, and South takes trick. South then leads four of Diamonds. (From this point future course depends on whether West plays the King or seven.)

1. If West plays King:

North takes trick with Ace and leads nine of Spades, which holds the trick when East must play low. North

then leads another Spade, which South takes, leaving a cross ruff with the two high jumps.

2. If West plays seven:

North takes trick with ten of Diamonds, then leads nine of Spades, which holds the trick when East must play low. North again leads to South's high Spade. South returns Diamond to North's Ace, thus drawing remaining Trumps and making good North's thirteenth Spade.

PROBLEM NUMBER SIXTEEN

Winning Solution by Mrs. Anna L. Freese

1. South leads three of Trumps, West winning with Jack, North discarding seven of Diamonds.

2. West leads eight of Clubs which South wins with Ace.

3. South leads King of Trumps, West discarding three of Hearts, and North a small Club.

4. South leads six of Diamonds, West discarding the five of Hearts, North a small Club and East a Club.

5. South leads six of Hearts, West winning with Queen.

6. West leads Queen of Clubs, which North takes with King.

7. North leads four of Hearts, South winning with Jack.

VARIATIONS

If on trick 4 West discards ten of Clubs, North discards a small Heart. If East

a) also discards a Club, South leads four of clubs, North making King and five.

- b) discards a Heart, South leads four of Clubs, North winning with King. North leads the Heart which South covers with the Jack, West winning with Queen. South makes last trick with six of Hearts.

West's lead of a Club on the second trick is forced, as a Heart lead would establish South's Jack.

The play is unchanged if West discards a Club on the third trick.

PROBLEM NUMBER SEVENTEEN

Winning Solution by John P. Poe

South leads King of Diamonds, North overtaking with Ace and returning Queen of Diamonds which South trumps. South then leads Spade which West must take with Ace. West must now lead either a Heart or a Diamond.

(1) If West leads Heart, North trumps and leads Jack of Diamonds which South trumps. South leads small Heart which North trumps and returns Ten of Diamonds, South again trumping. South now leads Jack of Hearts and however West plays, he can only make King of Spades.

(2) If West leads a Diamond, North takes with Jack and South discards a Heart. North then leads Ten of Diamonds which South trumps. South now leads a Spade and after West takes King of Spades North can trump either Heart or Diamond lead. North then leads Queen of Spades, killing West's Jack and North's two Clubs are good.

PROBLEM NUMBER EIGHTEEN

Winning Solution by Elizabeth E. Clarke

After South makes the Ace and King of Diamonds, West is put in with the Club. North must refuse to trump the Clubs but discards the three Spades. South discards a Diamond on the second lead of Clubs and trumps the third round.

East, on the third Club, is squeezed.

A Diamond discard sets up the Diamond with North and a Spade permits South to establish a Spade trick by ruffing in North hand. The Trump lead picks up the Queen and the remaining Spade wins the last trick. Should East trump the Club, North and South cross-ruff the rest of the tricks.

VARIATIONS

Ruffing the Club or the opening lead and endeavoring to place the lead with West by playing the Ace and a low Diamond will not solve as East can overtake with the Queen and make the two Spade tricks.

If a Spade is led initially, an immediate Club return by East will defeat the hand.

PROBLEM NUMBER NINETEEN

Winning Solution by Claire Goldberg

South leads nine of Spades, North discards Ace of Diamonds. South plays Jack of Diamonds, West covers and North ruffs, returning small Club which is won by South. South plays King of Hearts followed by five of Spades. East's best defense is a Lindbergh to Paris.

VARIATION

At second trick West's refusal to cover Jack of Diamonds simplifies problem. North will ruff on South's Diamond four lead and return Club which South wins. South plays Heart, Spade and Club in sequence.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY

Winning Solution by Lieutenant W. F. Boone, U. S. N.

1. South leads the Ten of Diamonds. North discards the Four of Hearts. West and East immediately are confronted with the problem of discarding, and certain facts become evident. Neither can discard a Club this round without permitting South's second lead to establish a Club trick in North's hand on which to throw the losing Spade. Until South relinquishes the lead, either West or East must keep both Spades to prevent a second Spade trick in South's hand. One must keep both Hearts, and East must retain the King, as long as the Ten of Hearts remains in North's hand as a potential trick. Therefore, West may discard a Heart or Spade on the first Diamond lead, and subsequently East and West are each forced to be governed in their discarding by the play of the other, due to the Spade-Heart-Club situation just outlined.

2. Suppose West discards a Heart. East must discard a Spade. South then leads the Five of Diamonds and West must play a Club or Heart. Should West play a Club, North plays the Ten of Hearts. South on the third lead gives East the King of Clubs, establishing two Club tricks for North and assuring North and South of winning the remaining three tricks regardless of East's lead. Should West throw the Queen of Hearts on the second Diamond,

LENZ ON BRIDGE, VOLUME TWO

th discards the deuce of Clubs, and East must discard a Club or second Spade. In either case, South's third of the King of Spades (North plays the Five of bs) followed by the Ten of Clubs gives East the with only Hearts left which must be led up to North, then wins the two remaining Heart tricks.

To go back to the first Diamond lead, suppose West ts to discard a Spade. East must play a Heart. On the nd Diamond lead West must discard a Club or Spade. West's discard is a Club, North plays the Ten of rts. South's third lead is the Club, and the situation is the same as in paragraph 2. If West's discard is a de, North plays the deuce of Clubs, and East must discard a Club. South's next lead is to the Ace of Hearts. th leads a Club which throws the lead to East with the 3, and South wins the two remaining tricks when he must lead Spades to him.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-ONE

Winning Solution by G. R. Patridge

outh leads the Ace of Clubs, North discarding the of Diamonds. South follows with his low Diamond th North ruffs with the Ace, and forces the lead on t with a Trump. South wins two Diamond tricks, on second of which East must give up the King of Clubs nguard the Queen of Hearts.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-TWO

Winning Solution by Chas. J. Steinbugler

outh leads the Jack of Diamonds, West and North a playing low. South then leads the three of Spades,

West playing the eight and North winning with the nine. On North's lead of the Diamond Ace South discards his Heart and Trumps a Heart lead with the three spot. A Spade puts North in again, and South trumps his Diamond lead, North winning the seventh trick with the King of Clubs.

VARIATIONS

If on the second trick West plays the Queen of Spades, North wins with the King and leads the Ace of Diamonds, allowing South to discard the Heart. North then leads the King of Trumps and puts South in with a Spade. South draws the last Trump and makes his odd Spade.

If on the first trick West covers with the Queen of Diamonds, North wins with the Ace and leads the ten spot, South discarding the Heart. South now ruffs a Heart lead with the three spot and leads a high Spade; whether or not West covers, a second Spade is played, which North wins. South ruffs a Diamond lead and North's King of Trumps wins the last trick.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-THREE

Winning Solution by Elizabeth E. Clarke

South leads the Queen of Spades, which West covers, and North trumps with Jack. North makes his King of Trumps and leads the Club, which South trumps. South makes his five of Spades and leads the Diamond; West is forced to trump and lead up to South's tenace.

If West refuses to cover the first trick, North discards a Diamond and trumps a second Spade lead. The remain-

ing play is unchanged, except that South is not now obliged to trump the Club, but may discard his Diamond.

PROBLEM NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

Winning Solution by Charles H. Scribner, Jr.

South opens with the Ace of Hearts, on which East drops the King to avoid taking the second Heart trick and being forced to lead into North's hand. South shifts to Clubs, leading the Jack; North plays low and East refuses to take the trick for the reason mentioned above. South now leads the Club Ace and follows with the eight of Hearts, forcing West, who is now reduced to Spades and Diamonds, to win the trick. North gets in on the next lead and South discards his two high Hearts on the Spade and Diamond tricks, permitting North's three small Hearts to win the remaining tricks.

THE END

